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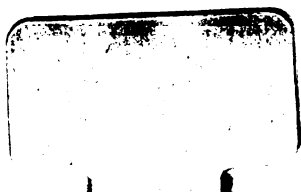
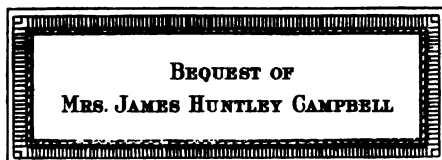
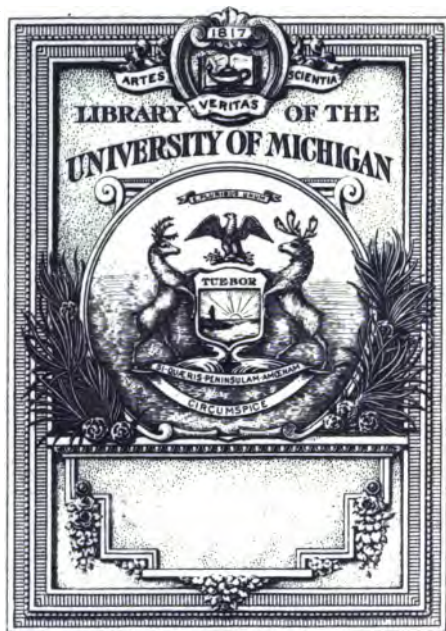
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A SOCIAL MIRAGE

MRS. FRANK LESLIE

F. TENNYSON NEELY, PUBLISHER, NEW YORK & LONDON



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of the author
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MRS. FRANK LESLIE

A Social Mirage.

BY
"MRS. FRANK" LESLIE, *Miriam Florence (Hollins)*



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*Bequest of Mrs. James
Huntley Campbell*
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I.

THE TORMENTS OF LOVE.

THEY are very much attached to each other, are they not?" asked I of a friend, as we drove past a newly married couple strolling leisurely up the avenue the other day.

"Well, I don't know," replied he reflectively. "I think I should say semi-attached. See there!"

I looked just in time to see the husband run up the steps of his club, while the wife, with rather a forlorn smile, signaled a passing omnibus.

"Semi-attached sounds too much like semi-detached," replied I pensively; and my friend, who is charmingly cynical, finished the thought with:

"Sure to become so, and a good job when it results in unattached. Saves a world of worry and bother."

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Now, was my friend right or wrong? I do not know that I could decide, or rather I have decided so many times, first on one side of the question, and then upon the other, that I will not reveal my present conviction if I can help it, but simply put the question before you, to be decided by each man or woman according to his or her individual experience, observation or inner light.

Is it better to be thoroughly attached to some person of the opposite sex, or to be thoroughly unattached, or having been attached to become semi-attached, and finally altogether detached, which is, of course, a very different thing from being unattached?

Evidently Tennyson considered detachment better than unattachment, for he sang:

“ ‘Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.”

But as he was not laureate of America I don't know that we are bound by his ipse dixit, and I for one question it.

To be attached—that is to be thoroughly and

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avowedly in love with some one, who is also in love with you and bound to you by some outward and visible tie, so that other people leave you quietly in possession of your own property, is certainly a most blissful and soothing condition.

I will even go so far as to admit that this condition in its perfection is the most satisfactory condition of which mortality is capable.

But then! You have no doubt occasionally blown soap bubbles and watched them float away in the sunshine. Was ever anything more glorious, more perfect in form, in color, in airy grace of motion, than a soap bubble floating in the sunshine of a summer day?

But should you like to invest your entire fortune in pipes and soap and water? Should you like to give up your friends and your home, and arrange all the details of your life solely with reference to the manufacture of soap bubbles?

Of course not. But why? Is not the first reason, and the prominent reason, their evanescence? Is not their delicate brilliancy a very

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byword for glittering insecurity? Do we not talk of bubble schemes and bubble hopes and bubble promises?

Well, the condition I have specified, the condition we will call the attached, the full fruition of successful love, is even more glittering, more glorious, more ethereal, in its charm, and more evanescent in its duration than the soap bubble. You have only time to say, "Ah, this is the perfection of happiness!" before some flaw, some cloud, some discord comes to mar that perfection which alone is happiness.

The moment you lose absolute perfection you lose content, and there is no happiness without content. To be attached, then, is to have now and again the conviction that you are perfectly happy, and a good many more thousands of times the conviction that you are wretched. Somebody said, "Fear has torment;" but he made a great mistake. Fear has excitement and interest, and the necessity for action, which is always a blessing; but love, if you please, has torment, and plenty of it.

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The woman who loves has, as it were, given a general invitation to all the aches and pains, and smarts and worries, and doubts and suspicions, and jealousies and heart-burnings of which the human soul is capable, and they are like poor relations—they accept the slightest invitation to come, and are impervious to all hints to go. If dislodged from one room, they promptly take up their quarters in another. You may neglect or slight them all you choose, may even forget their existence for a time, but when you least expect or wish for them there they are, and there they remain, or if by some rare good fortune they have to go, “the scent of the roses will hang around them still.” You never can forget how long they were inmates; you never can cease referring to them.

The old story of “Scissors” has a deep foundation. The man and wife quarreled bitterly as to whether something was cut with scissors or a knife. The quarrel was made up, “they kissed again with tears,” and all was well, when the wife remarked;

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“But, darling, you are convinced now that it was scissors, aren’t you?” “Why, I supposed you’d given in that it was a knife!” exclaimed he, and at it they went again, until he pushed her into the well, and she sank, with her hand thrust above her head, and the first two fingers working like a pair of scissors. What I mean by quoting the story here is that the suspicions and jealousies and resentments of love are never forgotten, although they may be hidden, or even driven outside the door, or drowned in the well. On the very next occasion they thrust themselves above the surface, crying, “Scissors!” and the old battle is to be fought over again.

If any man or woman were perfect, the case would be different; but love, although a magician to make common things appear like glorious things, is not a deity to make them actually so. The fairy gold is far more radiant than earthly gold, but some day you perceive that it is only leaves and twigs, not worth even the silver dollar of everyday commerce for which

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you bitterly wish you could exchange it. So no sooner does the trusting and loving neophyte become absolutely sure that here at last she has discovered the one perfect man upon God's earth than the bubble bursts, a little tinkling explosion like a fairy's laugh, a little spatter of cold water in a startled face, and the poor woman discovers that this man is very like other men, that he is capable of being cross, that he is more or less selfish, that he does not care to spend every hour of his day in her society, that he has other interests, other friends, other correspondents whom he does not choose to abandon; that he cannot say he never in his life looked at any other woman with satisfaction, or if he does say so is probably lying; that he is somewhat dull of apprehension, or is foolishly sentimental, or is an inveterate smoker, or likes cards, or takes a glass too much at times, or has some other or half dozen other of the imperfections flesh—that is to say, masculine flesh—is heir to. Then comes the time when she gives that general invitation to Errinnyes, of which I spoke just now

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—then comes the time when she learns the lesson that love has torment, and never again forgets it.

Nor must we be so unjust as to forget that the pronouns in the above statement may be reversed, and instead of she you may read he, and readily imagine the discoveries he may make to prove that the goddess of his love, the “one fair, impossible she,” whom he, incredulous of such wonderful fortune, has made his own, turns out just a woman, no better, no worse, than the average, and no greater prize than several hundred others of her contemporaries.

Then, if the man and woman are married—that is to say, if they are attached in the sense in which a yoke of oxen are attached to each other—the process of semi-detachment begins, and according to the nature and the circumstances of the yoke-mates, becomes an interne-cine, intermural warfare, with alternations of such happiness as is possible where content has fled.

If this state of things goes from bad to worse,

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as it sometimes does, it becomes the life of two galley slaves, manacled together, and hating each other with a hatred impossible to those who are at liberty.

When things have arrived at this point, just one hope of salvation from utter shipwreck remains—those who once were attached and then semi-attached and then semi-detached, must call upon the law to break the chain it has riveted upon their only too willing wrists, and to pronounce them detached absolutely and without peradventure, each to carry a scarred and wounded member through life, never again to be as they were before they submitted to the bonds they now have broken, and yet both of them thankful to have escaped even “by the skin of their teeth.”

To be perfectly attached, then, is to be perfectly happy, but with a happiness transitory and mocking as the beauty of a soap bubble. To be semi-attached is to be tossed and torn with perplexities and annoyances innumerable. To be semi-detached is to live a life of wran-

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gling, recrimination, suspicion, jealousy and heartburn—in its ultimate stage, a life of such misery and hatred that death or the law's harsh cleaver must be summoned to break the semi-chain. To be detached is to drag around the scars of the chain, to live a life of bitter memories, and yet more bitter regrets, to be forever murmuring, "It might have been! It might have been!" And so finally we come to the only position left possible for poor, foolish, credulous, loving humanity—the condition of the unattached.

To be unattached is, as I said before, entirely different from being disattached, which is the same thing as being detached. But the unattached is one upon whom the glamor and the thralldom of love have never passed. The unattached person is one who has never blown a soap bubble, and, what is more, does not want to blow one—a person so cold by nature or so sensible by conviction that he sees through the soap bubble business, so to speak, and declines taking any stock in it.

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“Yes, pretty enough!” he growls, looking out of the corners of his eyes at the floating, glittering glory, dancing on the summer breeze. “But look there!”

And he points to the empty spot where it has been, and walks away into the shade and the loneliness of his own little nook.

Or, if it is not he, but she, perhaps she remains unattached in quite another fashion. She sees the bubbles, that they are fair and desirable for a moment's amusement, and she is shrewd enough to see that they are frail as fair, and fit only for the moment's amusement.

She by no means declines to share in the sport, but in fact eagerly tries to excel it. She blows the biggest bubble of all, and she tosses it most gayly into the sunshine, and she watches it with all her eyes so long as it lasts, and when it bursts she is neither disappointed nor grieved, but blithely turns and blows another as big, as bright, as airy and as transitory. She neither deceives herself nor does she wish to deceive any one else. If some playmate will amuse him-

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self with her at the pretty sport, she welcomes him, and takes it for granted that he understands the nature of soap bubbles as well as she does. If not, it is his own fault—he should have learned the rules of the game.

Do you ask if I mean that it is a good thing to be a coquette and play at love, with no serious meaning in the play?

No; no, indeed. But a coquette is widely different from my ideal unattached woman. The coquette finds her amusement in pretending that the soap bubbles she wafts before the eyes of her victims are solid and true and permanent—round globes, whose surface is all mapped off in realms of paradise, and fortunate isles and mountains of perpetual youth and gardens of golden apples.

She knows better herself, of course, but she is a sorceress, and has the power of making those who come under her spell believe what she will have them, and the more fully they believe the more amusement she finds in the sport. After a while the bubble bursts and the spell is lifted,

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Then comes the bitter end for the victim, and for the victimizer the very cream of the joke—that is, if she is a real and absolutely heartless coquette, but if she is not there is perhaps a little remorse, a little virtuous resolution and a little quietude. Then more soap bubbles, and the same thing all over again.

But the peaceful and happy “unattached” is one who is so wise, so well-balanced, so self-sufficing, that love has never gained the mastery of his will or his reason—one who is able to care for his friends, and even to dabble and dally with the affections, and yet never give way to them—one who is love’s master and not love’s slave.

Such men there are, and when once in awhile I meet one I look upon him with awe and admiration. I walk around and around him as one does around that tilting stone in Ireland, which may be gently rocked this way and that by the hand of a child, yet resists the strongest man’s efforts to move it from its base. For my part, I would not for worlds move it, even if I

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could, nor would I move the man who resembles it.

The absolutely unattached woman who does not coquette, and who does not even play at love and never has, is rare, but I have now and again seen her also. She is generally literary or artistic or philanthropic, for a woman must devote herself to something. She is generally plain of visage and of dress. She is a little self-assertive and a little opinionated, for she has never learned love's sweet humility. She is rather careless of the opinions of others, and thoroughly contented with her own theories of life. She is, as a rule, very sure that love is a folly, or at least, would be for her, and, what is more, it is a thing she does not care to study or consider. She is perhaps the most satisfied and contented of women, but is she the happiest?

That is the question to which I have never yet found a satisfactory reply.

What do you think?

II.

FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN.

NOT long ago a few congenial souls were discussing woman's friendship for man, when one party, a man, rather sneeringly and mockingly exclaimed:

"What utter rot and nonsense this is to talk about platonic friendship when we all know there is no such thing!"

Thereupon I made some defensive, and, I dare say, rather pointed remarks, so that the rest of the company good-naturedly passed on to another topic of conversation, as all people do when they imagine a war of words is impending, and endeavor to avoid it.

Not so with my opponent, for later in the evening I saw him approaching my corner and

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was prepared for something of the cross-questioning which followed.

"I should have supposed that you were too intelligent a woman to have clung to the exploded idea of platonic friendship," he began rather irritably.

"And my intelligence, if I have any, has solved and proved the problem that it can and does exist," I answered with provoking decision. "Now you are really talking of something you know nothing about. I will admit, if you like, that platonism in the old accepted form is a bygone theory. It might have existed ages ago—in fact, I have not the slightest doubt but that the dear old philosopher reveled in his particular views and derived half the pleasure of existence out of his hundred and one friendships for the opposite sex, but history tells us he was a dear, exemplary, eminently respectable fellow, to whom the ordinary human weaknesses of life meant very little. We are living in a totally different atmosphere at present, and one must acknowledge there are few, very few

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modern Platos. Yes, this is too material an era for the recognized version of platonic love to exist but I still stoutly maintain that an ideal friendship between the opposite sexes is not only possible, but is an established vital fact, and there is no lovelier thing on earth than such a friendship.

“A prominent divine recently acknowledged from his pulpit that in his career his best friends had been women, and in the seventeen years of his ministry the truest, best words of encouragement had come from his female friends. We need only take a mental glance at those idyllic friendships which have become historical.”

“Oh, of course, you are now going to quote the same couples every one does when they discuss this subject,” said my friend, with a resigned air.

“Well, I most assuredly intend referring to what are known as existing facts,” I rejoined tartly. “The friendship of Mrs. Taylor for John Stuart Mill through twenty years of liter-

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ary communion, and the ideal companionship of Lydia Maria Child and Ellis Gray Loring, ought to be sufficient proofs that such a friendship as I contend exists can also be genuine and of inestimable value.

“A woman’s faith in a man’s ability, a woman’s interest, friendship and fidelity to the man whose avowed friend she is, will spur him on to achieve fame, fortune, and all those good things of life.”

“Then she is in love with him, that is all there is about it,” said my companion, still unconvinced. “The feeling and interest you have described come from love, not friendship. Many people mistake friendship for love. They love each other without knowing it, or they love knowingly and maintain silence.”

“Well, what do you call that but the height of a noble, disinterested friendship?” I rejoined triumphantly. “A person who, though possessing a deep, intense affection for some man or woman, can yet efface that love or hide it because the knowledge of its existence might give

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that other pain, has reached the sublimity of self-abnegating friendship. I knew just such a case. A man whose literary achievements were of the highest order possessed the friendship of a woman who was herself a successful litterateur. The man's wife was a sickly, uninteresting, irritable creature, toward whom he might have justly been excused for being indifferent, and yet so strong were his ideas of duty and honor that for years the love for his friend remained unspoken. Each knew the other loved, but the loyalty of their friendship was paramount."

"We French understand that much better than you Americans," here chimed in a distinguished French artist, who had been an attentive listener to our little discussion.

"The friendship of Le Fèvre and Mme. Dacier is often cited, but they were a pair of pedants, and I am sure were squabbling eternally, and throwing Horace or Homer at each other's heads literally or metaphorically every moment of their lives.

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“Voltaire and Mme. du Châtelet did much better. They contented themselves during their long friendship with mangling poor Newton between them, and, satisfied with this amusement, never thought of marrying at all.

“You remember, too, that old story, don’t you, of Ponte de Vesle and Mme. du Deffand, whose constancy to each other the whole eighteenth century admired and exalted? They passed fifty years together in the most delightful and perfect intimacy, to the great scandal of the women of the day, who could not appreciate an attachment so deeply rooted. There was never a cloud between them and seemingly no cessation of their love. The honest man, Du Deffand, let it pass with a touching resignation. But finally after all these years of attentions, protestations, pledges and devotion, the two found themselves alone in her apartments of Mme. du Deffand, with the husband long dead and madame ill unto death. ‘What are you doing?’ she called out to her friend from an inner room. ‘And where are you?’ ‘I am sit-

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ting in the corner of your chimney, quite at home,' he made answer. 'There are very few friendships as old as ours. It is fifty years and not a rupture,' she sighed. 'Yes, that is what I have always admired,' answered he. 'But,' exclaimed she, 'has that not been from the fact that at the core we were very indifferent to each other?' "

"And the application?" I ask, a trifle anxiously.

"Lies in the fact that the foundation stone of your platonic friendships is, after all, respectful indifference," answered the foreigner, picking up my fan and waving it idly once or twice.

"Then you think——"

"That there can be no affection between a man and woman without the danger of its developing into a passionate attachment, and if they do remain the sort of friends your charming American imagination would have them, they must indeed care very little about each other."

I immediately began an indignant protest,

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and continued my vigorous defense of the subject in hand.

“What rank heresy to talk in that way! I know so many men and women who are devoted to each other’s interests without any thought of love between them, and I also know that those friendships have lasted through trials bitterer than death. There must have been deep affection at the bottom to have stood up under such attacks on its genuineness. I have in mind also the case of a distinguished man of letters who, for sixteen years, has been the devoted friend and counselor of a literary woman, with whom he has maintained an unbroken correspondence. They have shared each other’s hopes, fears and triumphs. During this period many women have caught the passing fancy of the man, for, as it has been aptly said, ‘A poet without a love is like a sky without a star,’ and he has wandered out of his friend’s orbit only to return, however, with the tale of his disillusionment and to vow that friendship was more satisfying and enduring than love. That word

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love has never been spoken between these friends of mine for good and urgent reasons. The man's expression of devotion is in his books or articles, not always in open dedication, but in the use of some pet name of his friend's, some passages of her life, some description of her personality or her individuality, and thus he pays her a subtle compliment, which the world sees not, but which associates her with his best work, and makes her feel that she is its inspiration.

"In all this argument, however, remember I am speaking of people educated to the highest degree of intellectuality, men and women who thoroughly understand themselves and the world. With creatures of a lower order of mentality, those in whom the materiality predominates over the spirituality, these ideal friendships are among the impossibilities. In the first place, they could not understand the plane of thought from which such intellectual communication and friendship draw their inspiration. With them the emotional part of their

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nature would dominate every other sentiment, and when one yields to materialism, of course, friendship ceases. Oh, no; the man must be well poised and full of respect for the woman, and capable of sacrificing himself for her well being, a man to whom brains and mental advancement mean more than anything else, and above all, a man who believes in the equality of the sexes in everything, and recognizes the fact that women are as fully and completely equipped mentally as the members of his own sex. However, in forming these friendships, he must select the woman who is oftentimes hardest to gain as a friend, who, although perhaps needing just the kind of association it is in his power to offer her, yet gives the world and him the impression that she possesses sufficient courage and independence to fight life's battle alone."

"And the woman?" questions my listeners.

"Ah, the woman! Now we have reached the vital core of the question; for indeed everything rests with her. She can make or mar such an

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ideal friendship; she can gain and hold in its highest term the true, honest, unselfish affection and devotion of some man, or through weakness or wantonness she can merge it into lawlessness and shame, or even into hatred. To begin with, a woman must be sure of herself; she should study her own capabilities, know her own weak points and guard against them, and with it all possess enough innate dignity to be able to ignore or to check, as the case may require, any impulsiveness in her friend's nature."

"You are speaking of a very remarkable species of woman, and one very rarely met with," interrupted my first opponent cynically, while the face of the Frenchman wore the exasperating smile of one who is vastly amused.

"I assure you I know myriads of women who are clever enough and thoroughly capable of being a partner in an ideal friendship," I reply. "You don't know what capabilities many women have until you have tested them. What do the majority of men know of the inner

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natures of the women they meet casually at receptions, dinners and balls? There may be a dozen of your own acquaintances who have mental resources you never suspected, and, as you have not demanded anything higher from them mentally than the mere persiflage of society, why should they unfold flowers of the mind that the frost of your skepticism would simply chill and wither? Ah, my friends, too many women have proved their great natures under the call of emergency for us to doubt at this date that they are capable of anything they determine upon.

“First, remember this warning, though—try your woman. Don’t select one who is eternally suggesting platonic loves, and who wishes you to confide all your troubles to her after an evening’s acquaintance. She is the one who will break your newborn faith and bring you back to me with the worn out maxim, ‘I told you so.’

“Secondly, a man’s treatment of his woman friend must be considered. He should bear himself toward her with a courtly consideration

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at all times that will leave no doubt with any healthy-minded observer that he first respects and then admires her. He must give to her and her opinions the same deference he pays to those of his male friends. He must avoid, however, too much of an air of tenderness to pervade his manner, excepting that tenderness which a man might show toward a child. A comrade? Yes, the one sincere friend who understands his weaknesses as well as his good characteristics, and who will judge and advise him impartially and with justice.

“Lastly, you must be prepared to meet with all manner of ill-natured remarks and criticisms if you should ever enter into a friendship of this kind. But if the man and woman have sufficient strength and will to bear up and despise prejudiced cynicism, they will surely be strengthened and ennobled by the true enjoyment of such an association. I know of one pitiful case of a certain delightful companionship of two friends of mine that I had watched for years, and that had warmed my heart in watch-

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ing, but cynics like you two men, together with the worldly, calloused gossips who infest society, finally destroyed the exquisite plant. The man thought too much of his friend to expose her longer to the slights and slanderous remarks which he felt were injuring her, and she came to me in her desolation with the wail on her lips, 'Will the time never come when a man and a woman can honestly like each other without the world crying out love or flirtation?' "

III.

LOVE OR MONEY?

THERE is no smoke without at least a little fire to kindle it, and there is no popular belief without some foundation in fact. Popular proverbs especially are almost always indices to popular conviction founded on experience, and for that reason are generally worthy of attention.

Sometimes, however, the convictions thus expressed are thoroughly repugnant to those—what shall I say?—finer sentiments, perhaps, of our nature which, starting with us on the journey of life, are apt to fray out, grow ragged and dubious, and finally wear away altogether, much as the fringes and ribbons and laces of a smart gown will gradually disappear, if the garment is taken for everyday wear.

One of these proverbs, as we all know, is,

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“When poverty comes in the door, loves flies out of the window,” and our question just now is to discover how much fire goes to the manufacture of this smoke, how much hard, angular fact underlies this glittering generality.

Of course, we none of us wish to believe it. Human nature, left to itself, is very sentimental, and the advanced optimists are simply the people who decline to be convinced of the deceitfulness of sentiment. For myself, I like to be deceived by pretty sentiments. I like to be optimistic, and to cherish my childish faith that there is a gold cup at the end of the rainbow, and some day I shall find it; that the moon is made of green cheese, and that a bit of this same cheese, with bread and kisses added, is a wholesome and sufficient diet for man or woman, and especially for both together.

I say I like to cherish these beliefs; but the ugly question still arises, Are they beliefs?

Well, how is it with you yourself? Are you perfectly satisfied of the truth of any one of these suggestions—or rather, to throw aside

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hyperbole, are you perfectly satisfied that bread and cheese and kisses, with the man of your choice, is better than assured comfort for yourself and your family with the man whom you didn't choose, but who chose you?

Mind you, I am not saying that I think it is or it is not, for, in very fact, I do not know and never have quite made up my mind. As I say, I love to be cheated by sentiment, but the trouble is that there is a shrewd little demon of common sense lurking somewhere in my composition who is forever pulling my pretty sentimental beliefs to tatters and showing the hollowness of their foundations. Sometimes, I am sure, I am able to convince myself that he is mistaken. Sometimes I can boldly silence him and shut him up in a closet. But in a general way I must confess that he has the best of the argument, and it is the sentiment that gets put in the closet. But putting in the closet is not death, you know, and both common sense and sentiment soon creep out again, and the never-ending conflict is renewed. Probably my ex-

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perience is also yours, and that of plenty of other persons, for I rather think it belongs to human nature in general, and, thank heaven, "there *is* a good deal of human nature in man—especially in the woman."

Riches or love—which will you have, if you can't have both? Of course, to have both—that is, an unlimited amount of love and not too large an amount of money—is the ideal condition; but who possesses it or hopes for it?

Not too much money, I say, for the multimillionaire is so hampered and harassed and badgered and pursued and intrigued for money that he has neither time nor heart left for love; for Eros is a very exacting little deity, and will not give the fullness of his gifts to any but those who give him their lives—that is to say, their lives *for the time being*.

No, a man who is too rich cannot be a good lover, for not only are his mind and time pre-occupied, but before reaching maturity he has become imbued with the conviction that every

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man he meets is trying to cheat him, and every woman intends to marry him, either to herself or some of her family. This condition of mind is fatal to the mingled humility and courage essential to the true lover's character. A hare would not make a good guardian for a confiding but timid traveler, and if, as is often the case with hares, he was conceited as well as timid, it is so much the worse.

The over rich woman is not likely to be a good lover either, because as a general thing she does *not* believe that every man she meets wants to marry her simply for her money. The natural vanity of the sex works to her destruction by suggesting that she herself is quite competent to inspire all the devotion and admiration professed by her adorers, and she nothing doubts that were she the beggar maid King Cophetua would woo her just as ardently as he does to-day. Well, perhaps he would, but my little demon of common sense suggests that more probably he would not, and in this case I feel inclined to agree with him.

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But the unlucky millionairess, accustomed from her cradle to the servile adulation which surrounds such persons, has very likely never made the acquaintance of cold, cruel Master Common Sense, and not only does she believe that her own charms and merits evoke the attention she receives, but she has become so accustomed to having her own way, and fancying her own taste, and her own opinion, and her own prejudices to the law of the world, that she is quite destitute of that grace of adaptability which is the chief virtue of the woman lover.

Men are not adaptable—and we do not want that they should be, since the principal attraction of their sex is its strength. Women, to be sure, are just as strong in their own way, but it is quite a different way—the difference between the oak and the birch. When the tornado comes, the oak is snapped off at the root, but the birch prostrates herself in the dust—submits utterly and abjectly—and when the storm has passed, blithely resumes her upright attitude,

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shakes the raindrops from her tresses preens herself a little, and is as good as new.

Probably the oak admires the birch very much and calls her a sweet little thing, trembling at every breeze, and therefore loving to shelter herself under the protection of his "heart of oak."

Well, now, a woman born to millions doesn't grow up a birch at all; she doesn't want to be protected or sheltered, and she doesn't know enough to pretend that she does. She hasn't the strength of the oak, but she has all his arrogance; she hasn't the flexibility and adaptability of the birch, but she has her softness and slenderness of build. When the tempest comes and blows away the wall of gold which protects her while it lasts, her poor, little unyielding stem is very quickly snapped, and she falls a wreck.

So, after all, I am afraid we must concede that riches are inimical to love, that Plutus is the enemy rather than the ally of Eros, and that millionaires, men and women, are not likely to become ideal lovers.

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Shall we, then, accept the opposing theory, that bread and cheese and kisses are enough for life, and that sensible, well-instructed nineteenth century men and women are justified in marrying on such a basis?

Since love does not thrive in palaces, is he likely to be hale, hearty, and long-lived in the provincial cottage, with roses around the window, birds on the boughs, and nothing in the larder or coal cellar?

Well, no, Common Sense declares he is not, and for once Sentiment finds nothing to say, even when the little demon sneeringly declares, "When Poverty comes in the door, Love flies out at the window, and the ideal cottage has broad casement windows set wide open so that he can leave without too much trouble."

The beginnings of poverty, combined with love, are by no means unendurable. The fond pair, in all the pride and glory of their proud contempt of fitting surroundings, and all that sort of thing, take possession of their cottage in the country or their cheap flat in the city, and

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bravely begin life. Phyllis is going to do the trifling little amount of housekeeping for herself, while Corydon pursues the avocation that is to provide the bread and cheese.

For a month, or perhaps three or four, the wheels of the domestic machine run upon velvet. Phyllis washes the cup and plate used by Corydon with a tremulous joy in thinking that it is both her privilege and her duty to do so, and he springs from his couch at peep of dawn to light the fire, fill the teakettle, bring in the coals—in fact, do everything that a man may do to help the angel who has deigned to assume human form and minister to him. Each vies with each in making things light and pleasant for the other, and little inconveniences are laughed to scorn or welcomed as opportunities to prove how well they can be borne for love's sweet sake.

Phyllis has her trousseau, which, however simple, is at least new, and in perfect order, and probably Corydon has provided himself with a new outfit of shirts and underwear; so there is

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no mending to do, and no yearnings after a new dress or hat. But, not to dilate upon a process as inevitable as it is painful, this beatific condition comes to an end. He gets tired of building fires and fetching coals. He wants to sleep awhile in the morning and comes home at night too tired to perform the tasks set aside for him.

Worse than this, he is annoyed to find Phyllis too much worn and fretted with her daily routine to be good company. The little domestic details that used to interest him while they were novelties bore and disgust him, now that a querulous tone of complaint runs through them, and finally he snaps and snarls, and says something impatient at hearing that the grate of the stove needs to be taken out, or that a great horrid rat has been seen in the cellar, and he must get a trap and set it, or that the grocer's boy did not bring the eggs for breakfast, and will he go down and get them?

As for Phyllis, well, it is delightful to wash a plate and cup and knife and fork and spoon for

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the man you love, a hundred times, or five hundred, if you love him very much, but when it comes to five thousand times and five times five thousand, it does become monotonous to the fondest and truest heart that ever beat. Then, besides the personal dishes of the beloved, there is an array of prosaic disagreeable pots and pans, gridirons and frying-pans, not at all pleasant to handle for even the first three months, and rapidly growing intolerable as the months roll on.

Then there is the inexorable routine of the daily duties of life, hard enough to make attractive if you have no need of laboring personally in them, but liable to become a crushing burden if body as well as mind is compelled to always be in harness and at work. Then the clothes wear out and must be mended and altered and renewed, and if the poverty of our young couple is an absolute fact, and not a pretty fancy, the young wife has to add this labor to that of housekeeping.

She grows thin and haggard and fretful. She

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no longer puts flowers on the breakfast table, nor folds the napkins in fantastic forms. She no longer makes a pretty toilet to welcome her husband's return at night, and in fact she feels that he would hardly notice it if she did, for his brow is apt to be clouded and his voice sullen as he says in one form or another, "We must manage to spend less money instead of launching out into new clothes and a servant, and all that you seem to require."

Then come the babies, and then—then comes the sad "repenting at leisure." It is not a cheerful picture, and we need not treat it in a pre-Raphaelite spirit, bringing out all its sordid features and details; but allow me to say to all whom it may concern that it is a picture from life coming under my own observation not once alone, but many times, and very likely to reproduce itself in the experience of any one who chooses to attempt "love in a cottage" on a very limited foundation.

Must we say, then, that poverty is also inimical to love; that the goddess *Poverta*, cele-

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brated by George Sand as one of the most desirable of the Parnassian royal family, is as little likely to abide comfortably with Eros as is her brother Plutus?

Well, yes, I think so. In fact, were I compelled to choose, I should select the loveless wealthy marriage to the loveless poor marriage, for in the former case the ill-mated couple can retreat to the extreme limits of a very long chain, and all sorts of servitors and middlemen and distractions come in between and enable the discordant couple to forget their discordance in a multitude of other interests.

Marriage without love is a very miserable condition, but far more miserable if, through poverty, the married pair are forced into constant companionship and the sight and sound of each other's worries and complaints.

Happiness lies in the single region, sang the old Latin poet thousands of years ago, and nothing has been said since to supersede his utterance. Nothing is so desirable in its extreme as in its *juste milieu*, and most certainly this

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axiom applies to the substantial basis of married life. Two persons of sympathetic tastes, temper, habits and aims, marrying upon an income sufficient to gratify those tastes and habits, and to continue the pursuits they have enjoyed before marriage, stand a far better chance for a happy life than if they were enormously wealthy or extremely poor. Especially is this the case if the wife has a little money of her own, enough for her personal wants, and to make little presents to her husband as well as to other friends. If she has nothing of her own, it is a safeguard to her future happiness for her friends to insist upon her future husband's making some small settlement upon her and her future children.

A man respects his wife a good deal more if he does not keep her petty purse, and the wife loves the husband a good deal more if she does not have to ask for and account for every penny she expends.

IV.

AMERICAN HUSBANDS.

THERE is nothing new under the sun ; nothing whatever.

If that is not a new saying, it is a very true one, and most true things are old, and most old things are true, so that the wonder is why they have not been accepted and done with long ago. The reason, I suppose, is that every new generation, every new individual, in fact, insists upon acquiring his own information for himself, and scorns "other men's leavings."

Certainly this question of international marriages is old. I remember as a little child sitting up at a table to look at the pictures in a big Bible, and my favorite was a very spirited cartoon, representing the Benjaminites descending upon the vineyards of Shiloh, I believe it was, and each man seizing a struggling maiden to

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carry away to be made his wife. I used to clamor, they tell me, to be shown the "Gentlemen of Benjamin," as I called it.

There in that same old Bible we are told that the sons of God married the daughters of men, probably the earliest recorded instance of international marriages.

Later on in life I learned the story of the rape of the Sabines, and pondered much upon the probable after-life of those unwilling brides, and even ventured in my cynical young mind to wish that a fleet of Sabines might sail into the Gulf of Mexico, and carry away certain obnoxious elderly maids from the environs of New Orleans, my native city.

Neither history nor tradition tells us how any of these international marriages prospered, but I am inclined to judge, badly. I dare say the sons of God, whoever they may have been, were prim and priggish, and soon concluded that the daughters of men were a bad lot, and they were sorry they had undertaken their conversion. And I dare say those merry maids of Shiloh

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sighed more than once for the pleasant vineyards whence they had been torn, and the careless dances which had been their principal occupation.

As for the Sabine brides, one can well imagine the remarks they would upon occasion make to their bridegrooms, or rather to their masters, upon the rude fashion of their wooing, and how often, in whatever language Sabines used, they would say:

“What else could I expect from such a brute as you showed yourself that day?” And probably the Sabine gentleman responded with a contemptuous flip of his callous fingers or perhaps a touch of his whip.

William of Normandy, wishing to make an international marriage with Matilda of Flanders, waylaid her as she came from church, dragged her from her palfrey, rolled her in the dirt, and gave her a good beating with his stirrup leathers. I believe it was after that episode that she and her maidens embroidered the Bayeux tapestries in his honor, so I suppose that

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she was neither maimed in body nor unforgiving in spirit. But, for all that, I have not the smallest doubt that, in moments of conjugal unreserve, Matilda often alluded to the leathering scene, and William as often lamented that their acquaintance had not ended there.

But if one goes into royal international marriages there is no end really to the unhappy histories written between the lines of grave annals of State.

The French brides of English kings, with their pathetic attempts to import a little of their national gayety and grace into insular commonplace; the devout Spanish infantas, who found their religion either the deadly horror or the flippant scorn of the French and English courts; the haughty Austrian, Maria Louisa, scorning the Corsican-Frenchman to whom she had been bartered; that other unfortunate archduchess, Marie Antoinette, whom the French accused before all things of being an Austrian (*l'Autrichienne*)—in fact, the list is endless of unhappy royal international marriages, and we

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leave them as we find them for warning lights.

In our own day and time we have plenty of examples ready at hand. Probably every one of us is personally cognizant of some international marriage and can answer for ourselves whether, as a general thing, these marriages have been successful. Those which I have observed have not, or at least not when the bride was an American and the bridegroom of another nationality. The truth is, that American men make the very best husbands of any men in the world, and American girls are trained in their ideas of the relative obligations of husbands and wives by what they observe at home of their own parents, and are utterly ignorant of what any other than an American man expects of his wife.

The American, sincerely and unconsciously, respects and admires woman as a class. He feels that she is a creature to be shielded, protected, petted, caressed, not only while she is a young maiden whom he is wooing, but after

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she becomes a wife and mother. I suppose there is no civilized woman in the world possessed of so much honorable freedom as the American wife. I say honorable freedom as distinguishing her condition from that of the women of the *den i monde* in Paris and other places, who have secured for themselves a sort of freedom, or rather lawlessness, which can certainly not be styled *honorable*. No, certainly, there is no woman in the world with more possibilities of happiness before her than an American woman married to a typical American man. There are other men in the world who make better lovers. Romeo, the pattern and model of lovers, could not possibly have been an American. Othello wooed Desdemona as never American wooed or could woo.

One can hardly imagine General Lee, for instance, recapitulating his battles and making much of his "hairbreadth escapes by sea and land" for the edification of a young lady whom he wished to marry. And yet I, for one, would rather have been Mrs. Lee than Mrs. Othello,

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or even Mrs. Romeo Montague, for even as the Moor killed his wife from jealousy, the Italian certainly would have neglected and slighted his while he sang under the balcony of some other Juliet. True, he would have expected her to take the same liberty so long as she didn't get found out, but that state of things can hardly be classed under the head of happy marriages.

All men of the Latin races—Italians, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Portuguese—are endowed by nature with the gift of love-making. They can cast a look across the room a hundred times more eloquent than any word a Saxon could say on the fairest moonlight night that ever shone. Give him the moonlight night, and he not only looks but speaks like Apollo, like the sirens, like Mephistopheles himself, who is, as all accounts agree, the most fascinating creature in the world until you become too well acquainted with him.

But this irresistible Latin lover makes an extremely poor husband. In fact, the honeymoon is scarcely over before he resumes the occupation of love-making, only now those glances,

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those whispers, those adoring protestations, are devoted to somebody else. He has coursed his hare and captured her; he has charmed the bird off the bough and caged her. Now he looks for a hare and a bird who are still at liberty, and still can give him the pleasure of the chase.

Make love to one's wife! He laughs in good-natured contempt at the absurd suggestion, and with a final twist of his mustache, a final survey of his invincible self in the mirror, he walks away, leaving la signora or madame to pass her lonely hours as she will.

As a general thing, she contrives that they shall not be lonely. But, after all, this is not the ideal marriage, is it? Now, if the signora or madame is an American girl, accustomed to an American father and his domestic manners, she doesn't take to the new ways at all kindly. She does not want to have some other woman's husband come and sentimentally console her for the desertion of her own spouse. Although in Rome, she declines to do what the Romans do, but persists in demanding that Rome should do

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as New York or Boston or Philadelphia does. She doesn't succeed in creating a new code of international marriage relations, poor little soul, and the result is, as a usual thing, tragic. Either she beats or bruises herself to pieces in dashing against the walls of the inevitable, or she accepts her fate in a reckless spirit that carries her a great deal too far. She does "console herself" with a vengeance—and misery, warfare, perhaps divorce, perhaps death, are the results.

But the more common form of international marriage is not between an American and a Latin, but a sort of cousinly alliance between an English, Irish or Scotchman with the American girl, whose blood is generally derived from one or the other of these divisions of the Anglo-Saxon race.

This arrangement does better than the Latin alliance, for there are points in common between the mother country and her independent daughter which make more harmony. There is a common language, generally a common re-

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ligion, and an unwritten code of ethics and manners, which is pretty generally shared by each.

The British lover and the American lover are about on a par, although the Englishman, as a general thing, assumes as soon as he is engaged a certain air of authority and proprietorship which the American never dreams of at any period of his career as a lover and husband.

I feel sure that in the English marriage service the "obey" is spelled with a big "O," for it seems the principal point of the bride's new duties, and the *fiancée* is cheerfully ready to begin to practice her obligations. If she tries to rebel, her mother and friends, perhaps her betrothed himself, call her to account with the threat that if she doesn't take care she will lose her opportunity. Jack, or Tom, or Ned, will feel that so untractable a girl will make a poor wife, and he will be off his bargain.

Say that to an American girl, and what walls or roofs would contain her scorn? She would return that young man's rings and letters before

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the hour was out, and not know him the next time she met him. But with the English girl a different heredity and a different training have produced an entirely different temperament. She also has insensibly gathered from the mutual demeanor of her father and mother the standard of matrimonial manners and obligations. She perceives that her mother's first duty is to defer in all things to her father; to provide for his physical comfort at the expense perhaps of her own; to coax, cajole, persuade or deceive him into consenting to an entertainment, an expedition, a new gown or a new visitor. The father is a little Jupiter, and the mother is an "ox-eyed Juno," whose principal virtue is amiable submission, and whose principal study is how to circumvent the Thunderer.

Of course the girl accepts her father as the highest and noblest type of husband, and her mother as the inevitable type of wife, and her character molds itself insensibly to these limitations and upon these lines. She becomes another attentive, submissive, furtive wife like her

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mother, the charming English wife of an Englishman.

But make the marriage international, and the domestic machine declines to run in any such time honored ruts. A broad-gauge engine will not, *cannot*, adapt itself to a narrow gauge road, and some fearful bolting, with very likely a catastrophe at the end, will be the result of trying to make it.

The Englishman's estimate of women, her rights, her privileges, her duties, is altogether different from that of an American. Whatever his outward demeanor in his own or other countries, his underlying conviction is that—

“Woman is the lesser man;
All thy passions matched with mine
Are as water matched with wine.
Are as moonlight unto sunlight,
Nature made them blinder movements,
Bounded in a shallower brain.”

If the woman is bright, keen and well educated, he looks upon her as a phenomenon and rather undesirable as a wife. His highest

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praise of her achievements is that they are "almost worthy of a man."

Perhaps—for, of course neither all Englishmen nor all Americans follow one undeviating rule—perhaps he does honestly admire and appreciate this intellectual phenomenon and wishes to marry her—that is, if she has money—for not even in the Sublime Porte is marriage more of a commercial transaction than in England. Walpole's famous utterance that "every man has his price" is most applicable to the matrimonial market. Has the American bride of an Englishman a fortune (and she is not likely to become his bride if she has none), she is expected to relinquish it into his hands either entirely, or with the reserve of a certain amount settled upon herself and her children. If the property is not of a nature to be definitely settled, she binds herself to make over a stated portion of her income for his sole use, and perhaps in addition she pays all the expenses of the *ménage*—in fact, an Englishman is not ashamed to allow his wife to pay for his bread and butter,

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and in addition to give him the money to buy his cigars.

But women—that is to say, American women—do not generally care much about money, and are very willing to give it to the man who professes to love them, and whom they intend to love for life, honor so far as he is worthy of honor, and obey in love's sweet humility so long as obedience is the reasonable and voluntary expression of love.

But long before the honeymoon is over the young wife discovers her mistake. The lover-like attitude of the Englishman drops away like the petals of an overblown rose, and leaves nothing but sturdy wood and pitiless thorns. The irksome deference he has, through the season of courtship, felt obliged to pay to the delicacy or the prejudices of his *fiancée* is thrown aside with the wedding coat, and the most *négligé* of smoking jackets and slippers are figuratively assumed. He tells his wife stories that would startle a messroom or a club parlor. He flatly contradicts her; he leaves her to get

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around by herself, or to be escorted by any one who will take pity on her; he gruffly demands why this or that matter has not been attended to; he leaves her at home while he enjoys himself abroad; he allows her, if she will do it, to wait upon him like a servant, while he lounges upon a sofa; he lets her carry her own wraps and escort herself to her carriage. In fact, he utterly fails in that tender deference and ever-present care, that prevoyance which is so natural to the American gentleman, the American husband in every class, that American women often fail to appreciate it unless through observing or experiencing an international marriage, they discover how precious a birth-right they have sold for a mess of pottage and go mourning all their lives.

Every rule has its exceptions, no doubt, but, as a rule the American husband is the best husband in the world.

V.

AS TO GOOD MANNERS.

 WISE woman of our own day has pithily asked, "Is polite society polite?" And nobody has satisfactorily made reply because, I suppose, nobody has yet decided just who is polite society, and just what is politeness. And, after all, how can anybody arbitrarily decide either question? The polite society of our American metropolis is usually described as the Four Hundred, because Mr. Ward McAllister once said that there were only four hundred people in New York who could be said to be "in society."

But even in New York Mr. McAllister's dictum was not received as law and gospel by all the hundreds of thousands of persons who inhabit the great city, and probably the mil-

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lions who make up the rest of the population of these United States have a most republican disregard of any dictum upon the subject.

The polite society of any city, town or village in our country is its own most respected citizens. In a monarchy this is not so, for to every kingdom there is a court, and the fashions of royalty and its court are the fashions of the subjects. In other words, a kingdom has an official polite society, and the gold stick in waiting could rattle you off the names of the Four Hundred under his anxious charge as a shepherd could tell his sheep.

In such an order of society etiquette is laid down so clearly and so strictly that polite society has no choice as to its manners, and those manners are, as you may say, polite ex-officio. In our own land there is no central authority upon social subjects, and, in fact, upon a good many subjects not social—but that is neither here nor there—and with all its faults “my country, ’tis of thee” that I boast whenever I am out of it.

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So let everybody corporate take its own polite society, and consider whether its politeness leaves anything to be desired. Somebody has said that good manners are the expression of good feeling, and to a certain extent this is correct; for a selfish or ill-natured person, if ever so well trained in social etiquette, is liable to break down under sudden stress of circumstance, while the good heart will come to the front in an emergency and prompt the very truest acts of politeness.

The best test of good manners which I have ever seen is hunger. Take a party of travelers when the train breaks down forty miles from everywhere, and the sandwich baskets have all given out. An enterprising youth has made his way across the prairie and brought a limited amount of sustenance. Now is the time to apply the touchstone to the laborious politeness of the man who has been metaphorically spreading his velvet cloak under your feet for hundreds of miles. Does he struggle to fully supply your wants before attending to his own, or does he

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mysteriously disappear for a few moments and return, bringing you a small piece of ginger-bread, while the crumbs of bread and meat and pastry lurk unsuspected in his beard?

I have under similar circumstances seen a gentleman, whose pretensions even Mr. Mc-Allister would not have questioned, intercept the approaching commissary wagon and fill his own pockets to overflowing before the women and children and invalids of the party had a chance.

On the same occasion I saw a brakeman, with a quarter of a mince pie in his hand, take one heroic bite from its point, and then thrust the rest into the hand of a poor old man, who had not money to buy anything, and to whom no man had given.

But the greedy pig of a gentleman had charming manners, and the generous brakeman hadn't a manner to his name!

In less extreme cases who has not seen men and women who claim to be the very pinks of politeness grow surly, or peevish when dinner

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was delayed, or when some favorite or anticipated dish was spoiled, or when the choice bit of the bird or the joint was given to some one else? A picnic or any other of those irregular and most uncomfortable *al fresco* meals which romantic persons are so fond of arranging, is a splendid opportunity for studying manners. Being out-of-doors and liberated from the usual environment of civilized life, seems to give the opportunity to those who wish it for a temporary return to barbarism. To sit upon the ground and eat with one's fingers, to share a drinking vessel with several others, and to devour one's food in a semi-raw and semi-charred condition are among the delights of the picnic, where you make a fire and cook something, a process which to many people is the acme of joyous freedom and holiday making. But all these delights we share with the savage, and in accepting them we are very apt to accept his manners as well—that is to say, those persons are apt to whose politeness is veneered upon their natural temperament, and is not its neces-

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sary outgrowth. Not only do greedy people show forth their greediness and intemperate people their intemperance, but the man radically coarse shows forth his coarseness as he never would do beneath a roof; the silly man, or more probably the silly woman, proves herself a fool; the tyrant domineers openly and rudely—every one, in fact, returns to the brutal frankness of the untutored savage, and for an hour or so throws aside the mask and domino of polite society.

So true is this criterion that I hereby advise every woman to delay accepting the man who woos her until she has spent a day with him at a picnic, or some other form of “pleasuring” under the greenwood tree.

But, short of such extreme conditions as these, is polite society polite? That is to say, I inquire confidentially, Is your polite society polite? And I will tell you if mine is.

Do you live in a great city where, at certain hours of the day, the public conveyances are crowded sometimes to excess? If so, you have

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an admirable opportunity to study the innate politeness of the "best people" of your acquaintance, keeping yourself well out of sight. The much argued question about a man's right to keep his seat and let a woman stand is an excellent touchstone. I do not myself consider that every man is bound to relinquish his seat to every woman under all circumstances, but this rule of exceptions has been seized upon by the majority of the male sex as a rule of self-indulgence seldom to be set aside. I frequently hear men say, with a sort of brutal pride in their frank selfishness:

"I give up my seat to a very old woman, or a very pretty woman, or an acquaintance; but as for the rest, they can stand just as well as I can."

Another form of defense is: "I am coming home tired from my business and want to sit down and rest. Why should I give up my seat to a healthy young girl who has been down town shopping for her own amusement?"

Well, he shouldn't; but how much is taken

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for granted in this argument? All young women are not healthy and strong, although they may be about and look pretty well. How is a stranger to know that the "girl" has been downtown shopping for her own amusement? And is a tired girl or woman to be refused the opportunity for rest, if she wants it, even if she has been "shopping for her own amusement?"

Shopping, as all women know, is very fatiguing, and often requires a good deal of running about and standing and waiting, and, above all, is tiring to the nerves and exhausting to the lungs, which are forced to inhale a great amount of vitiated and overheated air. If the man who makes this excuse is really too tired to stand, or too much out of health to bear the fatigue, or too much broken down by work and worry, he has the right to keep his seat, unless the woman who wants it has all these claims to indulgence to a degree exceeding his own; but then comes the question, In what character will that man appear in the evening?

Will he continue to present himself as the

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overworked and overweary business drudge? Will he pose contentedly as an invalid, or a broken-down, middle-aged man, one to whom his own fireside, his slippers and jacket and newspapers are the luxuries of his hours of rest? If so, all is well, and you or I, or any kindly woman, would gladly give him our own seat in the car or any other help that we could.

But if this same man, after a good dinner and a careful toilet, goes forth into society with the air of a *preux chevalier*, professing devotion to every woman he meets, and offering chairs that are not wanted, and an arm that is not needed to ladies quite as healthy and quite as devoted to their own amusement as those he left to stand at his elbow in the cars, why, then I say this member of polite society is not polite.

But let us be just and lay the lash upon our own shoulders if it is needed, as well as upon those of our erring brother.

When a tired man, no longer in the vigor of youth, offers a seat to a woman who is not tired and is strong and well, let her decline it, gra-

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ciously but decidedly, and continue to stand, even if he does also. To take the place of a man who needs it when you do not need it proves you not truly polite, although you may be a star of the most polite society in the world. I know one young woman, and not a girl, nor a remarkably robust person either, who often declines an offered seat, saying brightly: "No, thank you. I enjoy standing. I do it from choice."

I do not know that she is among the Four Hundred, but she is polite.

Another way in which professionally polite persons are apt to prove themselves not polite from the heart, is in the treatment of elderly or stupid or tiresome persons of no social consequence.

To converse with attention and animation is very easy if the other party is agreeable, or very pretty, or a social magnate, especially if of the opposite sex, but for a woman to bring out her best manner, or her prettiest smile, or her entire attention for the benefit of a deaf old

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lady, with nothing particular to recommend her, or for a man to allow a male dunce to talk politics to him and express his views on the tariff question and explain what the president ought to have said in his message, and not show signs of annoyance or contempt, is the true politeness which society does not always appreciate, or rather does not discriminate from its poor electroplate counterfeit.

Another glaring impoliteness of most polite society is its self-absorption. It is so difficult for persons who set themselves up as standards to understand that there are other standards in the world, and other people are following them, and that one class is just as important to itself as the other. Sometimes very polite persons take note of the aliens revolving in another sphere in a good-humored spirit of curiosity and indulgence, asking patronizing questions and exclaiming in pleasant astonishment at customs and phrases not their own, and feel that they are showing themselves very liberal and kindly in their ways; but that line of conduct is no

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more polite than it is for the other sort to ask questions and make comments and handle ornaments and laugh at fashions which they, in turn, think strange and droll.

True politeness, like true godliness, is to respect other persons, not only in their rights, but in their tastes, and to carry into practice the rugged theory that "one man is as good as another, and perhaps a good deal more so."

It was a member of very polite society—it was, in fact, a peeress of Great Britain—who tried one Sunday to hear Spurgeon preach, but failing to find a seat, audibly remarked to her daughter:

"Come away. We've done the polite to God, and that's enough."

We all have heard of the queen among the Four Hundred, who, when a guest broke a precious plate, immediately dropped the nut crackers upon another and smashed it also, remarking, "These plates break if you touch them." But to my mind that was not the exquisite piece of politeness it is generally con-

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sidered. It was overstrained and obvious, and the guest doubtless felt herself accountable for two plates instead of one. Politeness must not be unnatural or artificial, if it is to ring true and clear. It must be the honest outcome of a sincere regard for other people.

Any reference whatever to age is a crude and dangerous compliment to man or woman. I saw a lady of eighty-five seriously annoyed lately by a young man who asked her how young men dressed when she was young.

"In motley caps and bells, with baubles in their hands, much as they do now," replied she, glancing at the fancy cane with which the youth tapped his beardless chin.

Another impoliteness is to try too much to help those who, while actually helpless, do not wish to appear so. Do not ask a lame man if this path is not too steep or these steps too high, and propose that he take the easy road, while every one else climbs the difficult one. Let him choose for himself. Do not officiously offer to read things for persons who do not mention

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their want of eyesight. Do not shout at deaf persons until you find they cannot hear a low, distinct utterance. Do not look sympathetically at a hunchback, or sentimentally lower your voice and speak in a tone of plaintive indulgence to one whom you know to be unhappy, unless they talk to you of their sorrow. In one word, do not let your companion perceive that you notice his or her weak point, but conduct yourself exactly as if it did not exist.

A thoroughly polite person can look upon the most ridiculous or painful object without the slightest expression of surprise, and can listen to the most absurd mistakes or ludicrous malapropisms with eyes of serene attention and lips of gentle acquiescence. And polite society very, very often fails to be polite in those and kindred niceties of the art.

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VI.

ABOUT MARRIAGE.

THE query, Is marriage a failure? which has been echoing from shore to shore, and enjoying, more or less seriously, the attention of thousands of English-speaking men and women, is, after all, only another form of that other popular query: Is life worth the living? In the one case and in the other, it is not so much a question of accepting or refusing the inevitable, but of how to use certain conditions imposed upon us by the laws of our being. For, let it be a failure, or let it be a success, marriage is an institution that has come to stay; and to vote it down would be about as insane and suicidal a policy as to say: The air is a failure; it is raw and creepy, and causes rheumatism, catarrh, phthisis and all sorts of other evils; let

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us, then, hermetically seal our doors and windows, and eliminate air from our scheme of living. Doubtless we could follow this wise counsel, and doubtless we should soon be cured of all the ills that air produces and flesh is heir to. Pardon the pun; but I just read that no woman had sufficient sense of humor to make a pun, so I was constrained by the innate contrariness of woman to make as vile a one as any man could.

Well, then, the mutual attraction of the sexes, and the impulses of human nature being what they are, and have been since Adam wooed Eve as the crowning delight of Paradise, and Cain went out and found himself a wife as the surest mitigation of the curse laid upon him, the association of a man and woman who find each other congenial and attractive will doubtless continue to be the rule of life until life shall be no more; and as we Anglo-Saxon-Latins claim to be the flower and fruit and crown of civilization, it is not worth discussing whether we shall revert to the condition of the lowest

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savages and cease to dignify and solemnize these unions by the accepted forms of marriage.

Probably no woman, however "emancipated," intends seriously to inquire whether we shall do away with marriage, although marriage stands confessed as the parent of much misery and discontent. No woman possessed of average common sense, setting aside such minor virtues as purity, delicacy and self-respect, would advocate the abrogation of a system which is her own protection against the degradation of a deserted old age.

Men are charming creatures, of course—full of honor, chivalry, loyalty, and all the rest of the make up of a Bayard; but all the same, I doubt if it would be easy to find, among my somewhat extensive acquaintance, five men who would, if marriage were proved a failure and dismissed from the scheme, remain contentedly constant to the woman who was at twenty so entirely to their taste, and is now at fifty or sixty so irritating, so tiresome, so incompatible, so old a story. That is, he does not

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apply to her all these disparaging adjectives, first, because she is his wife, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh, and every man shrinks from disparaging his own possessions; and, secondly, because the knowledge that any condition is irrevocable induces acquiescence; and although in exceptional cases the marriage tie must be broken in form as well as in truth, the general rule is that it endures while life does, and both husband and wife shut their eyes to each other's defects with a complaisance quite out of the question were marriage pronounced a failure and done away with.

An unloved and neglected wife is doubtless a very pitiable and lamentable object; but surely not nearly so much so as the woman who is no longer loved and no longer sought by him to whom she has given all, and who has not a wife's claim to at least outward respect and an honorable position in his house.

Of course, then, the question is not, Has marriage proved a failure, and shall it be discarded? but, Is marriage a failure under its

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present conditions, and how shall we improve them?

Well, why and how is it a failure? Several thousand gentle or shrewish, sweet or raspy feminine voices answer in tumultuous chorus: He is not sympathetic! He is not attentive! He is requiring! He is a brute! He is a bear! He is a pig! He laughs at me and scoffs at what he cannot understand! He is jealous! He is mean, and stints me almost to pauperism! He is devoted to other women, and spends more than he has upon his own amusements! He is always away, and leaves me alone at home! He never wants to stir from home, and keeps me chained to his side! etc.

From the other side rises a chorus ranging from basso profundo to thinnest tenor:

She's always nagging; there's no peace for a man inside his own house! She's always taken up with some other fellow, and wants me to efface myself! She thinks wrappers and crimping pins good enough for me, and lays herself out for the street and strangers! She neglects

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the poor kids, and they're tumbling up any way! She can't manage her house, and it's the most comfortless hole I know of! She won't take the trouble to keep a house, and makes me live in a boarding house, which I detest! She'd ruin a Rothschild! She's always preaching poverty and grudges me a cigar or a glass of beer! She makes it so unpleasant if I bring a man home to dinner that I have offended half my old friends! She's forever asking Tom, Dick and Harry to dinner and when I come home tired and used up I've got to put on my black clothes and make talk for a parcel of fools, instead of eating my dinner in peace!

And so it goes, and so it goes, the world over, or at least our world over, and both men and women are sick at heart, and worn and weary with the unending din of battle, and some wise head starts up and proposes scuttling the ship to drown the rats, and a crowd of desperate sisters cry Amen, and the stronger sex put their hands in their pockets and say, Do it if you like; we can stand it if you can.

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But let common sense be praised, there is yet a goodly majority who cry, Scuttle the ship! Nonsense! Let's get rid of the rats, and save the ship!

How? Oh, in various ways. There is no royal road to learning, neither is there to contentment nor to the right answer to the great conundrum of life; but it is most fortunately true that many roads lead to the desired goal, and many answers are the right one. Let us suggest a few, and leave it to our readers, both men and women, to evolve others suited to their own conditions. One great truth we would, however, suggest as suited to all possible cases. Marriage is a full and equal partnership, and each member is bound to rank his partner's interest as equal with his own. Let every business man ask himself just here if he treats his wife as "squarely" in all respects as he treats his partner, and expects his partner to treat him; and if he doesn't, let him begin to-day and try the experiment of showing her the same respect, confidence and care for her opin-

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ion that he does his brother man. Most women are both pleased and touched at being thus treated by the man who claims any sort of authority over them, whether fathers, brothers, husbands or what not; and the better sort of woman feels her honor engaged to prove herself worthy of such confidence and respect.

To women, especially housekeepers, let me tell a *mot* heard this summer. Two men were speaking of the shortcomings of a youthful landlord, whose tender mercies had been rather cruel upon them and their families, and one said: "The trouble with that fellow is, he hasn't yet got it into his head that he keeps a hotel, not to please himself, but to please his patrons, and so rake in the ducats."

Of course, the parallel does not go upon all-fours; for the wife does keep her house in the manner that pleases herself, and her husband is not a patron, but a beloved and honored guest, as well as equal partner in the property; but still it is the woman who "keeps" the domestic hotel, and should so manage it as to combine

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her own pleasure with her husband's comfort, tastes and that peace which is to the average man the *sine qua non* of domestic happiness.

Another point which has impressed itself upon my mind in considering my world, since this question has so vigorously arisen in its center, is this: The people who marry and the people who complain are generally young—that is to say, they marry before twenty-five and they complain before thirty. To be sure, having begun to complain at this age, they keep on complaining for a good many years, partly from the love of a grievance inherent in human nature, and partly because, having made up their minds that the path is thorny, they look out for the thorns, and take pains to scratch themselves on each one. But the discontent begins in youth—let us say, during the first five years of matrimony—and it should be treated as one of the diseases incident to youth, instead of being allowed to become chronic.

Young people of both sexes have a most exaggerated idea of their own importance. Cæsar

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must have been young, even for his years, when he so naïvely remarked: "The world was made for Cæsar;" but I have seldom met either girl or man under twenty-five who was not obviously under the same impression, and it is in the height of this delusion that the two come together as man and wife—often with the same result as when the MacGregor and the Campbell, with their following, met in the narrow streets of Edinburgh, and, each claiming the "Crown of the Causeway" as his undoubted right, passed the rest of the day in fighting out the question, until each chieftain, sorely wounded, was carried to his own quarters, resolved to fight it out again, and yet again while life lasted.

No, my dear girl, and also my dear boy, the world was not made for either of you—not even the little world of the new life you have just entered upon with such flourish of trumpets. The house is not yours, nor yours, no matter in whose name the title deeds are drawn. It is *ours*, and must be managed in scrupulous con-

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sideration of *our* tastes and wishes and comfort.

Just at first this will be very easy, for in the case of discrepant tastes it is so delicious in the honeymoon to say: Have it your own way, darling; what pleases you, pleases me; and to reply: No, no, have it your way; for isn't your way my way, now, love?

Very nice for the honeymoon, but the secret, is to keep it up, and not to allow all the concessions to come from one side; but remember that, with all the "darlings" and "loves" thrown in, this is a very practical business partnership upon which you are entering, and that mutual respect, mutual concessions, and mutual interests are the basis of the concern.

Neither of you is going to be quite satisfied, neither is going to be quite happy; both are going to meet with some severe disappointments in each other and in the new life. But the secret of preventing the marriage business becoming a failure is the same largely influencing

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all other business partnerships; hostility to your partner means injury to your mutual interests, and, if that partner turn out not quite the sort of companion you expected, make the best instead of the worst of him, and seek, by mutual concession and consideration, to work harmoniously together for what you know to be your mutual interest and profit in the heyday of life, and the assured comfort and repose of old age.

VII.

THE CONSEQUENCES.

DID you ever play the game of "consequences?" If not, I will tell you how, and you shall determine for yourself if it is not very like the game of life which we are all playing every day, whether we will or not.

Take two slips of paper, perhaps two inches wide and as long as ordinary note paper. Two persons and two pencils are the rest of the simple apparatus, and sitting so that they do not overlook each other, each writes at the head of his or her slip the name of a man known to both, either by personal acquaintance or historical renown.

This done, the name is folded out of sight and the slips exchanged, when each writes a woman's name, and again folds it out of sight and exchanges the slips. Next is, "Where

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they met," and next "What he said," then, "What she said;" then, "What the world said," and finally "The consequences." The fun comes in when the two slips are unfolded and the queer conjunction of persons, places, speeches and consequences are read out, as for instance: "Henry Ward Beecher and the Infanta Eulalie met at Barnum's show. He said, 'Rock me to sleep, mother.' She said, 'Rataplon, Rataplon!' The world said, 'What's bred in the bone will come out in the flesh.' The consequences were:

" 'When a body meets a body
Comin' thro' the rye,
Gin a body kiss a body,
Need a body cry?'"

Of course if the subjects are among one's own acquaintance the whole thing is funnier, and sometimes rather embarrassing if the persons happen to be present—as, for instance, if your maiden aunt is said to have met "the wickedest man in New York" at a "masquerade," and the consequences were "a sweet, sweet kiss."

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The maiden aunt is apt to afford "very pretty sport" on such occasions, to use an angler's phrase.

But, as I said before, how strangely fond the fates are of playing at this game among themselves and to our cost. Just fancy Clotho writing your name at the head of one slip of parchment and Lachesis yours on another, while Atropos grimly adds that of some other human being, and each, folding down what she has written, handing it to her sister, the two regarding each other with that calm, ironical glance of conscious power and half-malicious purpose which one must ascribe to the fates.

The papers filled and read out, a destiny is declared for him and her who have thus been coupled together, and the wild absurdities which complicate this destiny are the puzzle of a lifetime to the hapless victims.

This theory may be held fanciful by some persons, but really it seems to me a very satisfactory explanation of a state of things in the world not to be accounted for in any other way.

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The next time you notice or perhaps experience a most absurd conjunction of persons leading to a disastrous or perhaps highly ridiculous state of affairs, when next you hear some virulent gossip tell how Mrs. So-and-so and Mr. Whatever were seen together at such and such a place, and the world, with a very big W, expresses her opinion and foretells the direst results, just say to yourself, "Ah, the fates have been playing at consequences!" And in our own lives how very often we wonder what under the sun possessed us to take a certain course, almost certain, as our calm common sense now tells us, to lead to the annoying consequences under which we now smart! Why, we ask ourselves, should my name ever have been so coupled with that name? When I went to that place, why did that person blindly select that very time to go also? Why, when he said what he did, should I have replied as I did? Surely I was not a free agent in all this, but was blindly impelled forward by some unknown force. Truly

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"There is a divinity that shapes our ends,
Roughhew them as how we will."

And then some so-called friend kindly points out to us "what the world says" anent our affairs, and our hearts sink at the injustice and unfairness of its verdict and the treachery of those in whom we trusted for loyalty, and we feel angry at the stupid levity of those who cannot know the real meaning of the tragedy they insist upon treating as a farce, got up for their amusement, and altogether we retreat sick and tired from the contest and ask ourselves: Why am I thus placed? Why has the world a right to pass its judgment thus upon what it does not understand? Why am I set upon its pillory before the gaze of every fool or knave or idler or enemy who chooses to point at me and make a mock of my distress?

Did you ever have the occasion to ask yourself these questions? If not, give the gods thanks that they as yet have let you alone, and at the same time strengthen yourself for the future by remembering that when next the fates feel like

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amusing themselves with a game of consequences, your name may head one of the lists, and the fates alone know whose will be penciled under it. Only be sure that if the collocation admits of ridicule, or of obliquy of annoyance and disturbance to yourself, the thing will come to pass, the game will become a reality, the passing amusement of Clotho and her sisters will be a destiny. And then as the game goes on, do not we often feel that we are but blind agents, carrying out, in our own despite, a plan of which we in our inmost hearts feel the evil promise?

A woman, let us say, although these catastrophes are as common to one sex as the other, but we will say a woman, alone and lonely, oppressed with the weight of worldly affairs and even more oppressed with that "need of loving" which the French rightly place at the root of a woman's nature—such a one as this meets a man of plausible exterior and ready tongue, who, perceiving her lonely and brooding condition of mind, sets himself to convince

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her that he is the very person out of all the world capable of filling the aching void of heart and life, and turning the gray rainclouds that environ her into the roseate dawn of a brighter and better day than she ever yet has known. Such a promise as this is enough to bewilder the judgment and blind the eyes of the wisest woman that ever lived—that is, supposing her to be loving by nature and lonely by circumstance. It is like the song of the sirens to wave-worn Ulysses and his comrades—they well knew, those hard-headed mariners, that the Circean shore was not that for which they had embarked. They knew or should have known that to linger here was to risk the loss of all besides and to defeat the high hopes with which they had been sent forth by trusting friends, but Circe and her nymphs sang of love and shelter and rest, and a loving barrier between them and the hard, cold world; and to a man they abandoned all else and fell into the snare. You see, the fates had been playing at conse-

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quences, and one slip bore the names "Ulysses, Circe, met at," and all the rest of it.

But to return to our supposititious case—the wave-worn and weary "she" listens to this siren chant and yields to its tempting, "he says", "I love you beyond all else in the world; will you be my wife, and let me love you forever and a day?" "She says," "It is all that I have been longing for." They marry, and in a few years or months or weeks, or even hours, "he says," "You're a fool and cry for the moon," and "she says," "Oh, how could I have mistaken you for my ideal man! Yes, I was a fool, but you are worse; you are a brute!" Of course the remarks vary with the persons and the circumstances, and in a good many cases they do not occur at all, but when the fates take to playing with our lives all this and more is on the cards, and it is well to be prepared for it.

Naturally, if such a state of things does come to pass, an "unpleasantness" arises in the family which cannot long be concealed from the public eye, and presently we hear what



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"the world says." And, oh, what cruel and venomous and foolish things the world does say when once it finds the chance! Why is it that the world is so lukewarm and languid when praise is demanded, and so phenomenally active where there is an opening for censure? Let a man or a woman perform an act of heroism or of saintly self-sacrifice, let him or her spend life and fortune in doing good to the poor, or the unfortunate, or the wicked, and the world yawns and says, "Very good of him, I'm sure, but isn't he just a little bit of a crank?" Or, if it is a woman, Mme. World smiles pityingly and says: "Ah, yes, poor thing! A woman who doesn't marry must do something to make herself of importance. Did you ever hear that she was disappointed when young Croesus married her cousin instead of her?" Or perhaps it says: "Oh, gone into a convent, has she? What a blessed asylum for unattractive girls a convent must be! It is so much prettier to be called a sister of charity than an old maid!"

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Whatever the form of virtue may be, Mme. World is sure to find some flaw or pit in the fair fruit she cannot choose but praise, and cleverly detracts even in her approval.

But if it is not a question of right and shining virtues, but of mistakes and follies and wrongdoings upon the one side or the other of a matrimonial difference—ah, then Mme. World sits up straight in her chair and adjusts her lorgnette to her peering eyes, and finds so many flaws and pits in the apple of discord that she hardly leaves flesh enough to hold it together. What industry and energy the old lady suddenly develops! When virtue and noble deeds were under discussion, she seemed almost to fall asleep over her slurring comments and bits of half-praise, but now, now no girl in her teens dancing at her first ball or playing her first grown-up game of tennis displays more ardent zeal and activity. She calls her carriage, or she dons her walking gear, for Mme. World is of all stations and conditions of life, and she sallies forth, her eyes sparkling, her lips quivering

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with eagerness to be at work, and the number of visits that old lady can achieve in one afternoon is something to marvel at. And, when the preliminaries of weather and health have been hastily disposed of, how she plunges at her real business, dragging it in by the head and shoulders, perhaps in the midst of her hostess' plaintive lamentations over the ugly new styles of gowns and hats upon which Mme. Elise insists. "Yes, my dear, perfectly hideous, as you say. I saw it on that poor, dear Mrs. Erlymarter yesterday. Have you heard what a cat-and-dog life she and her husband are leading? Oh, I assure you it is quite so, quite so! They say he," etc., and dear Mme. World draws near enough to murmur and whisper all the shocking things she can think of into the ear of the listener, who presently remarks: "That is all very well, but my opinion is that there is always fault on both sides, and I dare say she drives him to it. For all her sweet looks, I fancy she has a temper of her own," and so on and so on.



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No doubt you have heard it all a hundred times, and perhaps—God forgive you—have joined in it, more's the pity. If you have, all I will say is, please don't any more, for it is only playing into the hands of malicious fates, who are greedily listening for "what the world says," to make out their little game.

And then come the consequences—those sad consequences which not infrequently involve a life in their toils. But perhaps we all know better than any one can tell us the consequences of our own faults and follies, and, worst of all, our own delusions. I suppose every woman who has character enough to enable her to suffer has committed blunders and has allowed herself to be deluded, and she has heard what the world has to say about them, and she has experienced the consequences. She knows what sleepless nights and weary days, what aching heart and bewildered brain may achieve toward a misery she never dreamed before; she knows how hard is the struggle to "keep up" before the eyes of that merciless

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world, and how complete her abandonment to passionate grief and rebellion the lonely hours of night may cover; she knows what it is to see friends turn into foes or strangers, to find that those she most thoroughly trusted have used her confidence as the weapon wherewith to wound her most sorely; she knows what it is to feel her own heart grow cold and hard, to lose her faith in man and woman both, and all but to lose faith in the God who permits such things.

But once again I say don't do so any more, for in doing so you are only carrying out the plan of Clotho, Lachesis and Atropos, those malign old women who so love to amuse themselves with us poor mortals. If they have begun to play their game with you as one of the counters, break it off just where you are; don't indulge them; don't play into their hands; don't be their victim.

For, after all, the human will is stronger than the fates, and if we use it vigorously can



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break down all their combinations. No matter if they have successfully brought you to "what the world says," the consequences are still in your own hand, and you can control them as you will.

VIII.

THE RIGHTS OF AMERICAN GIRLS.

 FRIEND whose business compels him to travel a good deal, although he is not that species of commercial agent vulgarly called a "drummer," came to see me the other day, and in speaking of his travels I asked him what seemed to him the distinctive features of some of our principal cities.

His answer was peculiar.

"The thing that has struck me most forcibly of late," said he, "is the different aspects after dark of the cities I have last visited. In New York under the gaslight certain forms of vice and danger stalk abroad almost as boldly as in London or in San Francisco. In the upper part of the town the streets are quiet enough, but

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what few prowling figures you see suggest garroters or highwaymen of one sort or another, while down town the pickpockets, watch snatchers and similar gentry jostle each other on every curbstone. Not a month ago a gentleman from the Provinces, inspecting our 'Yankee towns,' as he chose to class New York, told me that, strolling across Madison Square one evening, he was accosted by a well-dressed man, with a very conspicuous watch chain, who quietly said, 'Give me your pocketbook and watch, or I'll call that policeman over there and swear you were trying to snatch my watch!'

"My friend was, to be sure, a little verdant, but he was brave, and drawing back, he gave the fellow a blow in the jaw that certainly silenced him for a while, and spitting out a tooth or two he made off just as the policeman strolled that way, and, hearing the story, told my friend such attempts at blackmailing were not uncommon, and very generally succeeded with a quiet or timid sort of man.

"Now, that," pursued my friend, "is New

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York. In St. Louis, where I was last week, the streets after dark seem deserted. A few men loaf around the corners, and some tipsey boatmen frolic and sing around the riverside, but you never see a lady unattended. In fact, you seldom see a lady on foot, with or without an escort. But in two other cities, some distance apart—Detroit and Boston—quite a different set of conditions obtains. In both these places the streets are thronged quite as much after dark as before, and with much the same class of persons—quiet, respectable citizens, going about their business or pleasure and taking very little notice of each other.

“In Boston especially I noticed ladies, or at any rate very ladylike and quiet women, both young and middle-aged, walking the streets quite unattended, and apparently quite unmolested—in fact, I saw several both come in and go out of the theaters, sometimes two or three together, but sometimes quite alone. Speaking of this to a Boston woman, she said she should not be afraid to traverse any part of

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the city where she should be likely to go at any hour of the evening."

"Which proves Boston to be very much of a country village," remarked I, with a little sneer, for I much prefer New York to Boston myself; but my traveled friend replied:

"Oh, not at all! Country villages are apt to be very wicked little places, or at least whatever wickedness there is comes to the knowledge of every inhabitant, and village ladies are always very particular about having an escort if they go beyond their next neighbor's. They say they're afraid 'somebody will speak to them,' a phrase which always moves one to inquire, 'What are you afraid they will say?'

"No. I think that the air of Boston and Detroit and Philadelphia more than any other cities on this continent is adapted to the coming woman, and that the 'unprotected female' is going out of fashion in those places. The new idea (and why isn't it a good idea?) is that a woman is not necessarily the ward and appendage of some man who must guard her

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from the attacks of other men, and also from the follies of her own feeble brain, but that she is an individual of equal dignity and responsibility with the man and able to protect herself from whatever dangers may assail her—not with her fists, to be sure, but by her own dignity, and, if need be, by appeal to the officers of the law.”

“Strong minded!” suggested I.

“Well, you don’t think it’s nice to be weak minded,” retorted my friend, with a laugh; and so we parted.

Now, is his theory correct? Do the women of a few of our cities already feel the wave of progress that is slowly rolling around the world to this extent? If so, is it not a foreshadowing of what is to come?

There has been a great deal of talk in the last few years of women’s rights and a great deal of discussion as to what those rights consist in. But there is no solvent of knotty questions of a social nature like time and also experiment.

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Woman's right to work was pretty easily conceded, for, as a general thing, whatever a woman undertakes to do she does well and intelligently, especially if she is spurred on by a determination to show that she can do it as well as a man.

Moreover, women have always consented to work for less wages than men can command, and it is only very lately that some fair-minded and logical employers have practically assented to the proposition that the same amount and quality of work should command the same amount of wage, let it be done by a man or a woman. Then comes the right of standing up in the cars, a right which men themselves invented and conferred upon the mothers and wives of other men, although their own mothers and wives, when subjected to similar discipline from other men, probably explained to their own mankind how injurious they found it.

And the right of franchise is being gradually torn and dragged from the unwilling hand of man, and I for one am very doubtful if it will

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not prove a very perplexing white elephant when it has been fully captured.

But what concerns us just now is woman's right to protect herself, and it seems by my friend's report that this right is on trial in some of our cities pretty extensively.

Now, it seems to me that this is a very legitimate and sensible kind of right, and also one which will develop by its exercise the very best and most valuable traits of the woman of the future. If she is to stand for herself, instead of running behind her big brother at every alarm, she must acquire, or rather practice, dignity, firmness, self-respect and courage—not the courage of the prize-fighter, but of the monarch, the queen, who feels that she is safe among her subjects by the simple right of her queenhood.

Now let us get back to the pith of this little creed and consider whether our girls do really need chaperons, or if the old colonial custom of maids and matrons going whither they would, by sunlight and moonlight, in company with their brothers, their fathers, their cousins or

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their uncles, as the case might be, or without them, just as it happened, was not really nearer the proposed era of woman's rights than the world has been during the last half century. Of course, we all know that in the beginning these United States, or rather the society of the new nation, was by preference and choice opposed to the traditions of the old.

Etiquette and formality reigned supreme at the courts of Versailles and St. James, so let us despise etiquette and formality and be as patriarchal and pastoral as possible. President Jefferson, I believe it was, who complained of the cumbrous ceremonial of the White House, and stripped the servants of the modest livery George Washington had instituted, and when he gave a State dinner to the English plenipotentiary and his wife, took some other lady to dinner.

But as the country grows in wealth and luxury, as Americans more and more spend their holidays abroad and keenly observe the manners of other people, a change has crept over

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the primeval simplicity. Anglomania has succeeded to Anglophobia, and whether the White House servants may be liveried or not, half the coachmen and grooms of New York are, and the etiquette of visiting cards has been found worthy of several elaborate treatises, showing how we may by these magic bits of pasteboard pretend to those friendly visits which our grandmothers honestly made to each other.

Along with the other importations of conventionality has come the system of chaperonage, and it is as artificial as all the rest. The original idea is good. A very young girl should go into society with her mother, just as the parent bird, when the fledgling begins to try its wings, accompanies its feeble flight, chirping encouragement and showing how to guide the tremulous course and how to find the early worm or the glittering grub. But so soon as the young bird has strength and sense enough to fly alone, the mother goes about her more important affairs, and leaves the daughter to make practical use of the lessons she has learned.

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But the conventional improvement upon this idea is that the young bird never becomes a responsible bird with the right of self guidance, until she is mated, and that the most venerable and proper and demure old maid sparrow must never try to fly or to pick up that early worm unless she is under the protection of some little, flirty, flighty hen, just married to some jaunty little cock sparrow no older than herself.

I hope the simile is not insulting, but I declare I cannot help thinking of it when I see a lady of uncertain age, who has ripened by the experience of some score of seasons in society, entering the room under convoy of a rosy, curly, fresh young bride, who was in her cradle when the spinster was a *débutante*.

Now, this absurdity arises from a remnant of the old barbaric idea that all women are fools and all men are brutes, for that is the core of the old code of chivalry, of the institution by Arthur of the Knights of the Round Table, and a great deal more of the pretty and the impossi-

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ble state of things people sometimes pretend that they would like to reproduce.

What were the duties of the Knight of the Round Table? They were to ride up and down the land rescuing the dames and damsels who were being carried away by wicked knights, or who, being married to other wicked knights, were being dragged about by their hair, turned out to starve and otherwise maltreated. They were also to take and keep a vow of such self control and decency of life as is now expected of every man, but in that day was the exception and not at all the rule.

Well, under such a condition of affairs, chaperons for single women became a necessity, for the married woman, however young and silly herself, possessed a husband whose duty it would be to fight not only for his wife, but the helpless creature under her and his protection. If they went to ride in the green wood, he and his men-at-arms would prevent the predatory knights, who always seemed to be prowling around, from swooping down and

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carrying off the women, and if they went to a ball at Camelot or some other fashionable resort, the fear of the chaperon's husband would prevent those open and insulting protestations and proposals which apparently every man was ready to make, and every woman perfectly helpless to resist.

But those noble days of chivalry are past, and the world has moved on several degrees upon that enormous orbit which they tell us encircles some unknown center around which our entire system revolves. [Men have learned to cultivate their brains and their pockets, instead of simply their passions for murder and rapine. They are no longer content to be simply the male animal of the genus homo. If they are still formidable to the safety and honor of women, it is only when the woman courts the danger and would not for the world have any Galahads and Percivals interfering in her little amusements. And women are no longer fools, nor babes, nor the helpless prey of her destroyer.] She has as a sex grown out of childhood into—

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youth, and has developed an amount of character and a wealth of promise that have fairly made the tradition mongers and conservatives stand aghast and stammer in dismay: "Stop! Stop! Where are you going?"

Does not it seem probable that this extraordinary growth and maturity of womanhood is to make its mark upon society, as it has upon labor and upon politics and upon public thought? If women are showing themselves competent to earn their own living, to think their own thoughts and to express them in literature and out, if they already largely govern the school boards and are reaching out toward the helm of state, is it not time that they should learn to protect themselves from insult and to guide their own steps with discretion?)

A young fellow going into society does not take his father along to guard him from the snares and follies most young men are at least tempted to. In fact, these dear boys would resent, with a very formidable wrath, any suggestion that they could not take care of them-

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selves, and also of their sisters, if need be, nor indeed are they loath to propose themselves as the guides, protectors and champions of other men's sisters, if not of their wives. But why is the boy of twenty so much more responsible and trustworthy than the girl of eighteen, and why, if one is to take care of the other, does not she take care of him? for I think if the girl had been brought up with a sense of her own responsibilities she would be the stronger of the two.

Do not suppose, however, that I am advocating the complete emancipation of young girls from parental control. No, for I think nothing more disagreeable than the independent and almost insulting tone adopted in these days by a good many girls toward their fathers and mothers. No, my idea is simply, let the girls be trained while still children to such true and womanly self-respect and self-reliance that they would no more misbehave themselves in society than their mothers would, and let them as they grow older show their right to freedom by their moderation and wisdom in using it.

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But if some weak or ill-advised sister really needs a guardian in going among people, let her at least select some one old enough to be her mother, instead of a bride fresh from boarding school.

IX.

A PLEA FOR ARTIFICIALITIES.

PRETTY as a picture!" we often hear enthusiastic persons exclaim at sight of a fair landscape or a beautiful face. The speaker's genuine appreciation then is evidently for pictures rather than for the actual things which the pictures more or less truthfully represent, and his compliment to nature is in consequence lamentably left-handed. But nature can stand it well enough, and the sentiment underlying such a spontaneous expression is very human and natural. There is indeed almost invariably an instinctive justice behind social traditions and popular prejudices. In this case the fact is that the picture is a simplified adaptation of nature to the general comprehension. In a successful picture much is made of the salient features which pleasantly strike the eye, and

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everything else is eliminated, for the sight, like the other senses, and like the heart itself, has its own predilections and antipathies, which it subtly imposes upon the reason. It is the discriminating selection and adjustment of these outward affinities, then, that constitute the main function of art. And social artificiality is simply art applied to ethics, to the minor morals and manners of everyday life; hence the unanimous preference of mankind, particularly women—of course, as the old phrase has it, mankind embraces women—for the suave conventionalities of art over the crude verities of nature. It was easy to see that Alphonse Karr had been a philosopher before he turned florist when he said, "Few women love flowers, but all are fond of bouquets."

Flowers themselves are highly susceptible to the ameliorating influences of artificiality. Compare the wild flowers with the cultivated exotic or even with the favorites of the garden, and see how splendidly nature acknowledges, with what richness of bloom and incense of

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odor, the ministering attentions of art. How immeasurably the exquisite Parma violet surpasses the modest dogtooth of the wood! While that dainty wild rose, the eglantine, when called by some other name—Jacqueminot, for example, with a fine pedigree of artificiality behind it—really does smell far sweeter. This, of course, is no disparagement to the dewy eglantine, which is charming in its native wilds. All I claim is that the comparison certainly does not slight the queenly Jacque.

So the rule runs all the way up to men and women. High bred is high valued everywhere. War has repeatedly demonstrated that the city man—he of the nervous tension and artificial life—has better soldier stuff in him than the horny-handed patriot fresh from the plow.

Nature lays the foundation of all beauty, moral and physical, but she does not bestow the *cachet* of distinction. A Parisian *grande dame* once said in my hearing to Mrs. C., a fair American who prided herself upon that wondrous lily and rose complexion which the late

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Horace Greeley bequeathed to his daughters: "But, my dear, you should use powder. Not that you need it for beauty's sake, or to make your skin whiter—no!—but it softens the *éclat* of color and takes away the shine. All the difference between a dairymaid and a duchess!"

Civilized life at this present stage of the comedy is as full of intricately interwoven artificialities as a bank note is of silken threads and fibers. Paradoxically speaking, these assure its genuineness. From the most trivial affectations of speech and personal adornment to the awfulest concerns of life, death and the hereafter, we progress through such a series of discoveries of things being not at all what they seem that we may well ponder over Berkeley's theory of the unsubstantiality of the universe. Form and fact bear about the same relation to each other as the lines in a perspective drawing do to those of material objects.

Why, then, rail at artificialities, or vanities, as they are called in the case of most women, or

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hypocrisies or foibles, in the case of some men? For people, particularly writing and lecturing people, of both sexes, do rail at them constantly, though unprofitably enough, unless in a pecuniary sense. Most of these take their cue from Carlyle, of whom R. H. Hutton significantly remarks in a recent essay that he was forever fulminating in righteous wrath against shams, but never became enthusiastic over any truth.

After all, the main motive of the thousand and one amiable little deceptions practiced by everybody except the "uncoguid" is to please us—to please, or at least to avoid displeasing, the onlooking world. Is the wearing of a wig more immoral than a public display of nude cranium in the front parquet of a theater? Who will maintain that a stayless, shapeless woman receives or deserves more deference in public than one who has tastefully made good the deficiencies of nature, while at the same time accentuating her really good points? Can I in my heart care less for the worldling who breezily inquires after my health here than for

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the saintly person who preaches to me about my hereafter? This reminds me of a little damsel I know who is always making delightful "breaks," and who once inquired, "Mother, what part of heaven do people go to who are good but not agreeable?"

Keeping up appearances is surely an excusable affectation. It is on the side of setting a good example. What good men conceal is not their virtues, while bad men pay virtue the compliment at least of disguising themselves in her outward semblance. Assume a virtue, if you have it not. Doubtless it is best, on the whole, that a public career should so frequently show of the person who has lived it, like his epitaph, after death,

"Not what he was, but what he should have been."

The gulf between the apparent and the actual is not so impossibly wide. To be something and to appear it are indeed two quite different matters, yet in our time the latter is often the stepping stone to the former.

Love itself is a gorgeous fabric of artificiali-

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ties. Some philosophers have undertaken to prove to us that modern romantic love is entirely a product of latter day æsthetics, developed from the fantastic chivalry of the middle ages. Certainly the passion portrayed in the epics and odes of antiquity, though heroic enough, is far grosser, more sinister and more material than the exquisite sentiment, the "love that is passion's essence," in Rousseau, for example, or the fine, fervid exaltation of Tennyson. No; love in our era is, as compared with the classic days of old, far more delicate, far more spiritual and far more artificial. To-day the adorer beholds the adored one encircled with such a nimbus of ideality as can only be approached by a somewhat kindred perfection; hence a studious concealment of defects, a sudden bourgeoning out of qualities, a general putting on of grace. And, on the other side, the adored one is probably making equally strenuous efforts to appear in a favorable, even though artificial, light. Thus we see artificiality in its noblest aspect—that of a striving after the ideal.

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But are not such ideals predestined to disillusion and disappointment? Disillusion, no doubt. But why be ungrateful? Why expect too much? The *dénouement* of a happy dream is necessarily the awakening, yet I fancy all will admit that in such case 'tis better to have so dreamed and wakened than never to have dreamed at all, or than to have had bad dreams. Love is the dream, marriage the waking. Quite pertinently does Byron ask :

“ Think you if Laura had been Petrarch's wife,
He would have written sonnets all his life? ”

Of course not. There was something palpably artificial about Petrarch's well-sung devotion to the lovely Provençale. But the world is agreed that this immortal fantasy was worth quite as much as the solid reality possessed by Laura's husband, M. de Sade, who was a commonplace and rather morose bourgeois of Avignon.

What is duty? That which we exact of others, wittily answered Dumas *fls.* Well, one

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of the things we are most certain to exact of others is good manners. Good manners, like charity, should begin at home. We must set a good example in this respect, especially we women, whose prerogative of administering the unwritten laws in polite society and in matters of taste I believe even our most churlish critics have not as yet challenged. The five talents of woman, according to Ruskin, are those which enable her, first, to please people; second, to feed them in dainty ways; third, to clothe them; fourth, to keep them orderly, and fifth, to teach them. Pray, and how is she to fulfil all or any of these duties if you deny her the right to exercise her supreme talent, the one which inspires all the rest, her talent for artificiality, for the arts of affectation and dissimulation? Virtue itself fails to please unless it be clothed in gentleness and grace, and, as Miss Edgeworth has told us, even vice loses half its evil by losing all its grossness.

On the masculine side take the Duc de Morny's succinct illustration of politeness. "A

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polite person," he declared, "is one who listens with interest to things he knows all about when they are discussed by a person who knows nothing about them." Then the politeness of the man of the world, which in truth stands for our modern chivalry, is obviously incompatible with outspoken unartificiality.

In the matter of hospitality this question touches us very nearly. Did you ever feel your heart warm to the winning effusion of a Southern welcome and half unconsciously contrast it with the glacial "sincerity" of the reception you got when you first presented yourself as a stranger somewhere in England, for instance? Not but that the English hospitality was true-hearted and genuine, but, alas! it was masked in that stony British formality which, as a matter of fact, is quite as preposterous an affectation as the superficial extravagance with which all Anglo-Saxons reproach all Latins. If you desire to appreciate them both, to enjoy your visit for all it is worth, you must never dream of taking either one of them literally at his word.

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Let us deprecate so far as we can the conventional tirades against conventionality, against artificiality. If by force of repetition they end by almost persuading us against our own conscience, we can take refuge in the sterling maxim of Amiel that human kindness is the first principle of tact, and respect for others' feelings the primary condition of *savoir vivre*.

X.

VICES AND FOIBLES.

WHILE the barrooms are full of men the churches are full of women," said a shrewd observer in one of the daily prints lately. His statement was a broad one, but after all conveys a truth of which women may perhaps be too proud.

They don't frequent barrooms and similar resorts, to be sure, but then one must remember they don't want to. They do go to church a good deal, but they take pleasure in doing it. Virtue and vice are, after all, comparative terms, and the temperament of the individual comes in to modify most decisions.

On one of the occasions when I helped to swell the congregation of women at church, I heard what seemed to me a most sensible and rational theory propounded by the preacher.

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He was talking of the judgment, and he said that the Judge was not going, like an earthly magistrate, to apply an iron law to every case alike, but to consider each culprit's temperament, opportunities and environment. That seems to me a plan that, if it could be applied in mundane courts of so-called justice, would be productive of far happier results than can now be obtained.

Men, for instance, would not be so severely judged for frequenting barrooms as women would, and a fretful, suspicious, "nagging" woman would not be punished for her flights of temper as a man would be for similar conduct.

Each sex has its own class of faults, and doubtless the temptation to those faults is far stronger in the class which has a sort of hereditary right to them than in any other. They differ essentially, these faults of men and women do, and very often they clash all the more on account of these differences. Man's wrong tendencies run into vices more or less coarse and degrading, while woman's tend

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rather to foibles and faults more or less narrow and contemptible.

In this matter of barrooms, for instance, almost every man thrown into business and political relations with his fellow-men, or who mingles freely with other men of various classes, finds himself very often invited, almost compelled, to drink something with them, and I suppose two-thirds of the men in America are in the habit of doing so. Just why people should invite each other to drink as a sign of good fellowship, or honest intentions, or forgiveness, or amity, is rather a puzzle, especially to the female mind. Why is the process of deglutition a specially social one? Why don't they invite each other to wash their hands together, or comb their hair, or blow their noses—in fact, any of the familiar functions men perform all the time, just as they drink when they are thirsty and eat when they are hungry?

However, not to spend time in theorizing, we grant the fact that men have a habit of drinking together, and downtown they resort to bar-

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rooms for that purpose. I am not writing a temperance lecture and do not say there is any wrong in doing this, but I do say that drunkenness is a vice, and a very disgusting one, and that a habitual drunkard is not a fit or indeed a possible companion for any woman. The vice is one natural to him as a man in our present condition of civilization, especially in great cities, and perhaps a perfectly just and omniscient judge would not condemn him for it half so severely as the woman does who is compelled to suffer from the effects of a vice which is no temptation to her and which she cannot understand.

On the other hand, the woman has her foibles of temper, of selfishness, of jealousy, of vanity, of precision and intolerance.

These qualities are not vices, unless we call jealousy one, but they are capable of making life intolerable to any one compelled to associate intimately with the woman who possesses and develops them.

A man under certain conditions of excitement

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and provocation is apt to become coarse and brutal. He swears, he bangs the furniture about, he tells his wife she is a fool, or a liar, or a scold, and taunts her with cruel insults.

He visibly, to her eyes if not to his own, steps down from his position as man and gentleman and becomes an object of scorn and loathing.

Now comes in her foibles to fan the flame his vices have kindled. She uses her nimble tongue like a lash, she mimics him, she *looks* at him, she wishes she had a kodak to take his picture—in fact, she arouses all that is worst in his nature to a condition of frenzy, and after that point anything is possible. He may strike her; he may heap upon her insults so terrible that no penitence can ever wash them away; he may even be so wrought upon by rage and that sense of helplessness which assails a man when a clever woman lets loose her tongue upon him as to lay out his brute strength upon her and lay her dead at his feet. Two men or two women rarely if ever stir each other to such a pitch of

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irresponsible wrath as that to which an angry woman can drive an angry man.

Or let us impartially reverse the case. One of a woman's foibles is love of admiration and homage. She has beauty and fascination of manner, and she likes to see their power confessed. Her husband is a jealous man, and at the same time indifferent to those claims in his wife which he was prompt to confess before they became his own property. She seeks amusement and consolation in public and flirts with this or that admirer, rather pleased at finding that she can stir her careless lord to frantic jealousy. If she persists, and from the mere love of power goads and teases him too far, he may break loose from those bonds of morality which every decent man assumes with his marriage vows and go to the bad generally, revenging himself upon his giddy wife by flaunting before her face rivals whose very rivalry is a degradation to her.

Or perhaps her foible is an inordinate precision. Her home is like a nunnery. Her own apartments are like those of an old maid. She

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cannot have smoking anywhere in the house because it scents the walls and furniture. She cannot have newspapers or paper novels thrown about on chairs and tables. If the husband, manlike, pushes the furniture this way, and that, throws open a window, and rudely twists the lace draperies like a rope to keep them out of the way, the precise woman replaces everything the moment his hand leaves it—perhaps silently and with a long-suffering air of patient martyrdom, perhaps with a cold and formal request that Mr. So-and-so will not turn her parlors into a caucus room or worse.

The precise woman carries her precision further than the furniture. Her husband, coming home from his all-day association with men, tells his wife what he thinks a good story or a funny jest, or tells what some man has told him about some other man. The precise woman is shocked. Perhaps she ought to be shocked; perhaps she ought to make her husband feel that he has come home to a purer and more refined atmosphere than he has been breathing through

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the day, but her foible of precision comes in to aggravate his vice of coarseness, and she rebukes him in a cold and bitter fashion that only disgusts and annoys him, instead of acknowledging the fun and then gently and deftly suggesting that it might have been more delicately put; or else by a certain surprised and pained look and a softly breathed "Oh, Ned!" or perhaps with a caress and a whispered word like "Oh, darling, don't; please don't"—in one of these ways or in some similar fashion a sweet, natural woman will soon make her husband ashamed of being coarse, at least in her presence, and she will have helped instead of hindering him.

But just so sure as a coarsely-genial man marries a precise and intolerant woman, just so sure is she to drive him from home and from her presence. He may not become unfaithful, as the husband of the flirt does, but he seeks in his hours of leisure the society of other men or of women who, as he puts it, "don't care what you say to them." Or he lounges behind the

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scenes of the theater, or in the stables, or at social assemblages far below his own level—anywhere, in fact, that he can feel free and untrammelled.

I once remonstrated with a man whom I had known before his marriage as a very genial, good-humored fellow, with the capacity for becoming a really charming man.

“Why do you go to such places? Don’t you see that you are letting yourself down terribly? What would your mother have thought if she had heard of your being there last night?” demanded I, with the freedom of long friendship; and he, with a sort of groan, replied:

“I know it; it’s all true; you can’t tell me more than I sometimes tell myself. But what can I do? I’m a fellow that likes a good joke and a jolly laugh, and to let loose generally when business is over and play begun. But you know my wife—that is, you’ve seen her—you couldn’t know unless you lived with her how horribly good she is——”

“Horribly good!” echoed I.

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"Yes, just that," responded my friend. "She's neat and nice, of course. In fact, I fell in love with her look and air like a white lily, but if I were going to 'call her pet names, darling,' now, I'd change White Lily into 'Ice Woman.' When I get home at night, I want to throw down my hat and coat, and kick off my boots and unbuckle the armor I've worn all day, and 'lay off' generally. I want a sweet, loving little woman to come and give me a kiss, and say she's glad to see me, and ask if I won't have something to drink—why, I'd be grateful if she offered me a cup of tea even! But, no; it's 'Why, John, what a noise you make; and pray don't throw your hat down on that chair. Have you cleansed your feet on the door mat?'"

"Then if I try to tell her a joke, or a story, or something lively, she pinches up her mouth like a vise, and says I insult her, and, oh, dear! I feel just like that fellow who was shut into an iron cell, and saw the walls close in and in upon him till they crushed him flat. I have to get out of it somehow, and you know when a horse

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kicks over the traces he generally bolts to finish up with."

A similar foible to this is that of religious intolerance. Almost every man wishes his wife to have some religious belief and practices. In fact, I think a good many men look to their wives to take care of the spiritual concerns of the family, just as they do after the housekeeping or the mending. It is a part of their duty to the marital firm. But a great many women pursue this duty until it becomes a nuisance. They are not content with going to church in season and out of season themselves, but they must drive their husbands thither at the point of the bayonet—that bayonet of their tongue, which they know how to use so fatally.

The young man of the present day is not a church-going animal as a general thing. He will go as a bachelor sometimes on the chance of walking home by the longest way with some pretty girl. He will go while he is engaged because his *fiancée* wishes him to, and he will go when he is first married as a sort of obligation

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to "forswear sack and live cleanly" that he has taken upon himself. But after the first year he becomes accustomed to his new dignities, and is very apt when Sunday morning comes round to have "a little headache," or to feel very tired and in need of a good rest, or to boldly declare that "he'd rather go for a walk out of town." In fact, he doesn't want to go to church.

Now is the time when the wife, if she herself is a churchgoer and a religious woman, has the opportunity either to make or mar the happiness of her whole married life. If she is wise, she neither argues, scolds nor sulks over her husband's indevoutness, but goes her way alone, trusting to time and tact and opportunity, one or the other of which will, if she is patient and sweet and wise, generally give her if not all at least part of what she desires.

But the intolerant woman! Alas, the father of evil must often be gay and glad at seeing his work so well done with godly weapons. Bitter speeches, direful forebodings as to his eternal

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doom, sneering non-acceptance of excuses, a rigid and frozen air of pharisaic displeasure—all these or even half of them will soon drive a man who began by being careless and indifferent into bitter and honest hatred of religion or any of its practices, and the vices of ribaldry and profanity and blasphemy may spring up a sturdy crop from the seed sown by the foible of intolerance and overrighteousness.

But not to multiply instances, it is, as it seems to me, a broad and general truth that the vices of man and the foibles of woman act and react upon each other with terrible power, and that when one of a married couple finds him or herself confronted by an ill quality in the other, which seems well-nigh intolerable, their first step should be to keenly examine themselves or some vice or foible which acts as an irritant and incentive to the other. The old saying that it takes two to make a quarrel may be amplified to mean that when a married couple lives unhappily the fault is not generally all on one side, and if each party will honestly confess

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this and make some concessions the breach may be healed, or at least lessened.

As a general rule, men are wanting in tact and adaptability, and women are deficient in tolerance and patience. If both men and women recognized these deficiencies and tried to remedy them, a great deal of matrimonial trouble would be done away with almost imperceptibly, and the marriage car would run upon velvet instead of cobble.

Of course, this general rule has exceptions, and a good many, too.

There are men so absorbed in their own selfish enjoyments, so bound in their own vices, so utterly regardless of the welfare of other persons, that no amount of self-sacrifice on the part of their wives would do anything to soften or elevate them.

There are women so utterly frivolous, shallow and heartless that no magnanimity or unselfish devotion upon the part of a husband could elevate them.

Of such I have nothing to say, and probably

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nothing but death or some other separation will help their sad case. But in the majority of cases, if a man has vices, let the woman see to it that her foibles do not aggravate them, and *vice versa*.

“Verbum sapientia sufficit.”

XI.

WOMAN'S INTUITIONS.

YOUR charming sex, as a rule, are not possessed of reasoning power," remarked a gentleman to me the other day. "They rush at conclusions in the same sort of zigzag fashion that a humming bird darts at a bed of clover. Nobody can tell which blossom she is aiming at, and I doubt if she knows herself."

"And yet I observe that the humming bird generally obtains the honey," remarked I dryly, "and however a woman reasons I observe that she generally 'gets there's in the end.' "

"Aw! Ya-as—ah—'gets there,' " mumbled my companion, who was an Englishman not yet up in American slang. So I came to his aid with:

"She extracts what she wants from the question in hand just as the humming bird extracts

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the honey, and I imagine the honey is just as good and considerably less adulterated than if it had been crushed out of the clover blossom by a steam engine."

"And do they make honey by steam in your wonderful country?" demanded my Englishman, eagerly catching at what seemed a tangible fact.

Well, an American would not have said it; but I am sure a good many of them think it, and especially those men whose reasoning powers are of the heavy, wooden order which work like an old cider mill I once stood and watched in the country, with creaks and groans portentous, and which required a yoke of oxen to drag it round its little appointed circuit.

Of course we all know that woman's reason differs from man's reason, just as her light, agile figure differs from his breadth of brawn and muscle. No woman is likely to excel in "putting the hammer," or in lifting heavy weights, or in a bout of fisticuffs in the ring, but a great many women excel at tennis and billiards and

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archery, a good many are excellent shots with light rifles, and some are as invincible with the foils as Bussy d'Amboise or Henriot. Look, for instance, at the Chevalier d'Eon, who fought many duels and killed many opponents before she was discovered to be a woman. All of which goes to prove that where quickness and skill are the qualities required, a woman is just as likely to succeed as a man, although where weight and brawny muscle are essential she does not claim equality.

What is true of the body is true of the mind in most cases; in fact our friends, the theosophists and psychists, claim that the body is only the outward and visible sign of the spirit within, and that what a man is so he is bound to look, if not at the start, surely at the finish. I don't say this is true, for I have not made up my mind about it; but it is a theory much in vogue just now.

I was saying very much the same thing the other day to a man, who replied:

"Yes, women often play well at billiards,

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but they win the game by a series of the most daring flukes and impossible hazards—plays that no man would ever venture upon, and would be howled at if he did.”

“But you say they win the game,” remarked I, and he grumpily responded:

“Yes, they win, but they’ve no right to; and it’s just the same in fencing. They dart under and over your guard, and use a foil more as if it were a sting than a recognized weapon.”

“But if it were a real combat they would be likely to kill their opponents?”

“Yes, the poor fellow would be spitted while he was trying to make out what his fair enemy was doing.”

“Capital! That is just the parable I want to support my theory. You men can’t or won’t allow that a woman has reasoning powers, but her tongue is like her rapier—she may not use it according to the rules laid down by men, but while her opponent is wondering what his fair enemy is doing he finds himself stabbed to the heart.”

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"To the heart, yes, but not generally to the brain," responded my friend, and I assured him that his retort was quite feminine in its patness and conclusiveness.

But it is not only in argument that women show this side of their complex nature, but in achieving whatever end they set before themselves. They are not—that is, women, as a rule, are not—consciously scheming and cunning; they do not say, "The best way to win this success is to appear indifferent and to seem bent upon something else," but they all unconsciously act out that plan and so achieve their end, they scarcely know how.

I have a friend who possesses a great many pictures and other ornamental items of furnishing a room. She is, like many Americans, very peripatetic in her disposition, and nearly every year sees her in a new set of apartments. I lately visited her in her latest home and noticed that very few of the pictures were hung, and that the bronzes, china, statuettes, shrines, brackets, draperies—in fact, all the objects of

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"bigotry and virtue"—were piled upon tables in the back drawing room, evidently awaiting their fate.

"You have been here almost a week and not arranged your pretty things yet!" exclaimed I; and she, with a little sigh replied:

"No! The inspiration hasn't come yet. Until it does I haven't the faintest idea where any of those things belong, and if I insisted upon arranging them very likely I should take such a dislike to the rooms that I couldn't stay in them."

"But when the right moment comes," suggested I, with a laugh, "you will be like a poet who cannot wait for pen, ink and paper to put down his idea."

"Exactly," replied my friend gravely. "When the right moment comes I shall see the precise spot where every picture should hang, every vase stand, every drapery be flung so as to look as if it had dropped there by the happiest of accidents. My only trouble is lest the inspiration shouldn't come before my reception

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day comes round, for I positively won't let anybody else arrange them, and neither will I let the world see the naked framework of my home."

"Well, I shall come at any rate, for the skeleton in your cupboard is an old friend of mine."

"Yes, you may come, but the maid will probably tell you that I am in bed with neuralgia. Then come right into my bedroom, and we will have a cozy cup of tea all to ourselves."

But when the reception day came round, and I presented myself with an expectant smile just under the surface the maid simply ushered me into the drawing room, where stood my hostess in the midst of her charming surroundings, every one of which had found the very place of all others where it looked the best and the most at home. Somebody was saying to her as I approached:

"I am sure, Mrs. —, that you select your apartments to fit your pictures and ornaments. You saw, for instance, when you looked at this room that your Bouguereau never could find

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another such light, and that Venetian mirror and that pier were made for each other."

"An eternal fitness for each other, haven't they?" assented my friend, turning to me with a twinkle of the eye as she murmured:

"The inspiration never came until noon today, but the moment it did I called the servants, and we had everything done by 3 o'clock. Not bad, is it?"

"Perfect, my dear; but your demon is a very unreliable official."

"Wouldn't do for a business man, would he?"

"Nor for a man of any sort," thought I to myself, as I moved away, and presently in my lonely drive I fell into my favorite fit of musing upon the different characteristics of man and woman, and of the difficulty each has in comprehending the other fully.

Probably of all the problems that puzzle the masculine student of woman the most utterly insoluble is this matter of intuition. It is far easier for a woman to understand the formal and

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laborious methods of a man's mind than for him to grasp the idea of an intuitive process which cannot be formulated even by its owner. A man of intellectual nature and regular education bases his every argument, his every conviction, upon mathematical truths. He is fond of saying, "It is as certain as that two and two make four," and that to him is a perfectly unassailable standpoint. He perceives that to the woman with whom he argues the fact that two and two make four is not of the slightest importance. She says, for instance, that a perfect army of street roughs threatened her, and it was hours before she could get through them. The man corrects her with:

"There were but four of the roughs, and it was not five minutes before you were out of their reach and quite safe."

"Only four indeed! More likely forty-four!" cries the woman, with scorn and indignation.

"I assure you there were only four—two on one side of the door and two on the other, and two and two make four, don't they?"

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"Not always, by any means," retorts madame, with all the courage of her convictions. "Not in this case, for instance. Two and two made a great deal more than four for me, I assure you."

And she is actually more correct than the man is. Four street ruffians, inflamed with the lawless spirit of the mob and attempting to hustle and annoy a lady simply because she is well dressed and looks scornfully at them, become in her eyes and to her consciousness a great many more than two and two—they become a crowd, a mob, a phalanx, a terrifying and perhaps deadly force. She is quite right in saying that in this case two and two did not make four, but forty-four, and that the period of time during which she felt herself in their power was to her without bounds or limit, but a chaos of endurance answering to many hours of ordinary life. If the clock said it was but five minutes, why, all the worse for the clock; and it must have been a male clock, although they are generally called "she."

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But you can't make a man see this. You, for instance—you are reading it. Tell me, aren't you saying to yourself:

"She means that to the frightened woman the mob *seemed* large and the time *seemed* long, but in point of fact two men and two men are only four men, and five minutes are but five minutes."

There! That is exactly the difference between a man's mind and a woman's. The man is fast bound, "tied and fettered in the chain," not "of his sins" perhaps, but of his mechanical make-up. He simply *cannot* take in the idea that an event is not what actually and literally happens, but it is to each person the results it produces upon that person's mentality.

A volcanic eruption, for instance, or an earthquake, is to the scientist a perfectly regular and comprehensible phenomenon of nature—the combination and explosion of certain gases and the liquefying and projection of certain mineral subterranean deposits. He gets out of the way of the rivers of lava just as he would get out of

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the way of a locomotive, but he is no more terrified by the one than the other. It is simply a phenomenon of nature, like a snowstorm or a high tide.

But to a savage, who had never seen or heard of such a thing, this volcanic eruption is the malignant or tyrannical act of some mighty spirit, some all-powerful demon who is threatening to destroy mankind unless he is propitiated. He accordingly propitiates him either by throwing his eldest son into one of the gaping chasms, or by vowing to do some tremendous act of heroism, or perchance, if he is a very, very good savage, by resolving not to flog his wife any more.

In any case, the eruption makes a big change in this savage's career. It is to him a matter of life and death. Its results last perhaps after the man is dead.

Now, the scientist's estimate of this phenomenon and the savage's estimate of the very same event are both true, perfectly true to the individual forming the estimate. Neither one

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could possibly view the occurrence from the standpoint of the other; neither one could perhaps even put himself in the other's place enough to see just what it was the other believed. Each is to the other a poor, deluded fool, and the savage despises and marvels at the philosopher just as much as the philosopher at him.

Now, who shall say that either is absolutely right, to the stultification of the other, any more than a mirror is a false mirror because it shows you a different image from what it shows me?

And so by this rather roundabout course we come back to the different workings of the man's and the woman's mind. Each arrives at a solution of the problem, whatever it may be, by a route utterly unfamiliar, even impossible, to the steps of the other. Perhaps the solution is the same in essence, although somewhat differently expressed; perhaps, on the other hand, the results are widely different; but in either case I contend that both are right and neither wrong, and most women will be ready to

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agree with me. Most men, on the other hand, will disagree and exclaim contemptuously:

"How ridiculous! How exactly like a woman's argument! Of course a thing is either right or it's wrong. How can two opposing views both be correct? If two and two make four on one occasion, they do on every occasion. It's all nonsense, utter nonsense."

So speaks the lord of creation and considers the matter settled, and so it is for him; but the lady of creation has an equal right to an "*ipsé dixit*" on this and every other topic of common interest and value to both sexes, and she says:

"My friend, you are wrong. Things are not what they seem either to you or to me. Things are what they become in the consciousness of the individual receiving them. Two and two do generally make four, I grant you; but there are occasions when they make infinitely more or infinitely less, and it is your misfortune to be a man and therefore unable to perceive this truth."

If some reader of the masculine persuasion

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asks me, How do you know this rather startling truth, and how do you prove it? I reply, with that grand simplicity characteristic of great minds and great truths:

I know it by intuition, and I prove it by looking in upon my own convictions, which tell me it is a truth.

If yours don't tell you so, it is not a truth for you, and we continue gazing, the one upon the gold and the other upon the silver side of the shield, each assured that our own is the true side.

XII.

SYMPATHY AS AN ART.

I DON'T know any circumstances of social life so "trying to men's souls" on both sides as the circumstances demanding sympathy. Death is bad enough, but it is by no means the worst. Most of us have been through that dark and terrible hour when that which seemed our all has been laid away from our sight and from among men, and our friends have come dressed in somber clothes, and with somber and set countenances have one by one insisted upon laying bare the wound we would fain hide under our mourning garb, and expressing more or less crudely, more or less delicately, the sympathy of which they have come to assure us. It is a social necessity that they should come. We should feel surprised and slighted if they did not, and we do not dream of shirking the

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painful duty either of receiving or of paying visits of condolence, and yet I often wonder if it would not be well to induce a social revolution wherein this and several other time-honored customs should be swept away.

Time-honored, indeed, for speaking of this matter the other day to a friend I was told that when Job fell into affliction his three friends at once made an appointment to meet and make a collective call of condolence. But—and here please observe the superiority of discretion in the days of Job compared with ours—having arrived, with Job they sat down upon the ground, and for seven days and nights nobody spoke a word! Now, we don't have time in this era to sit in silence seven days and nights in the presence of our friends, but I often think if our custom was to go and sit seven minutes, more or less, beside our friend and then go away with a mute caress or clasp of the hand, how much better it would be than to try to say *something*, and that generally the wrong thing. I shall never forget a dear little unconventional widow

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whom I went to see just after the sudden and shocking death of her young husband.

"It was so good of you to come; but, oh, don't say a word—not one word!" gasped she, and I almost literally complied.

Yes, bereavement is bad enough, and to very few, if to any, is it given to speak the words of comfort or reassurance. But there are sorrows far more cruel than death; there are bereavements sudden and more hopeless than those of the grave, and it is in these that sympathy may indeed despair of fitly expressing itself, even by sitting silent seven days and nights in its presence.

A man in some prominent position of trust becomes a defaulter and runs away, leaving his wife and family to bear the shame and notoriety of his crime, perhaps leaving them in poverty and debt as well, for very few criminals commit but one kind of sin. A defaulter is usually intensely selfish and considers his own desires so exclusively that he not only appropriates moneys not his own, but his neighbor's wife as

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well, and is utterly callous as to the suffering of all sorts to which he condemns the woman lawfully his own.

Now, what sympathy can one express to such a mourner as that wife? What word would seem other than presumptuous and intrusive to such bereavement? And yet we all do feel sorry for her; we all do long to let her know it and to comfort her.

Some of us who have struggled in deep waters ourselves shrink from the attempt and contrive some other mode of showing the true sympathy we feel, and yet there is grief so deeply dyed with shame that positively no notice should be taken of it—even a box of flowers, even a new book or a card, would serve to hint at condolence too strongly, and we remember that though speech is silver, silence is often golden.

But yet again there are griefs even deeper and more sensitive than that of the insulted and deserted wife; there is an agony of shame, not to be shifted to other shoulders than one's very own; there is a bereavement known to all the

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world, and yet which the sufferer would fain hide from even her own eyes, and this is when a woman has too readily yielded up her affections to one who simply amused himself with her easy credulity, and when her devotion began to pall "he kissed and rode away." Every one in her little world knows the whole story. The malicious whisper: "Well, she threw herself at his head. What could she expect?" The kinder hearted ones murmur: "Poor thing! I was afraid he didn't mean anything." And the sharpest sting of her mortification is that she knows that they all know and are scoffing at her or pitying her. Still she can bear it so long as nobody says anything—but *they will!*

There are sure to be at least two or three well-meaning fools who want "to express their sympathy," who in fact insist upon doing so in spite of all the wriggles and pantings of their victim—as helpless as a frog under a crotched stick, with a cruel boy at the other end, or more appropriately, a frog in the clutches of a vivisectionist, who is determined to lay open

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the throbbings of "poor froggie's heart" in the interests of humanity! This sympathizer bides her time. She waits until she can pen her victim in a corner, or penetrate to her bedroom, or get her into a victoria or a *coupé* where no interruption is possible, and then she begins: "My dear child, I want to tell you how dreadfully sorry I am for your disappointment; but how came you to suppose Mr. Smith was serious in his attentions? Tell me all about it, dear. It will comfort your poor heart to speak out. Did the man ever really ask you to marry him?" And so on until the deserted damsel is ready to fling herself out of the vehicle under the horse's feet and feels that the loss of her lover is as nothing compared with the shame of being pitied and sympathized with.

Or take the case of a man who has been horse-whipped or kicked or slapped in the face by another man stronger and bigger and therefore braver than himself. He doesn't want to know that his friends are sorry for him! He would much rather be suffered to imagine that they

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hadn't heard of it, and yet there are plenty of thick-skinned idiots who will on the first opportunity rush up with outstretched hand :

"My dear fellow, I want to tell you how indignant I am at the way that brute treated you ! Fairly kicked you down the steps of the clubhouse, they tell me ! Just like these great hulking beasts who think, because they are big and strong, a little fellow like you or me must give in to all their insolence !"

Probably the man thus apostrophized at once measures the other "little fellow" with his eye, and mentally decides that he can thrash him at least, and will do so on the first opportunity.

Among my acquaintances on one side or the other of the water I am proud to include a lady whose father was hung, and justly so, for murder. Of course, the most of her friends painfully avoided any subject within rifle shot of the subject, but I heard that more than one well-meaning person had attempted to *sympathize with her* and thereby nearly drove the poor woman to madness.

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Or think of a mother whose son has committed some shameful crime, and is either a fugitive from justice or is suffering her penalties. Fancy *any*, sympathy, even the most delicate being anything but an offense to such a sufferer. In fact, there is no love upon whose death it is not safer to count than upon that of a mother. It is positively indestructible, and I have never found any other class of love to which that word would apply. Certainly some wives have loved some husbands, some maidens have loved some lovers, some women have loved some men "not wisely, but too well," through good report and ill, through fortune and misfortune, cruelty and kindness, faithfulness and unfaithfulness, even to the bitter end; but this unreasoning constancy cannot be predicted of wives or *fiancées* or mistresses as a rule. Much depends upon the individual.

But in the case of mothers it is the rule, especially as regards her sons. The bad boy may develop into the unmitigated scamp, the profligate, the villain, the jailbird, but though she

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may be driven to discard him, to banish him from her sight, to declare that she no longer calls him son, there is always at the core of her heart an undying flame of love, a divine forgiveness and pity and longing that she could not if she would quench or destroy. Let the sinner but reach his mother's feet, let him never so clumsily plead, "Mother, I have sinned—oh, forgive me!" and his pardon is assured. Even though her judgment, her reason, her conscience, sternly condemn him, that mother love of hers will rise up and drown them all in the torrent of its deathless force.

In the Scripture story it is set forth as a memorable thing that the *father* of the prodigal son forgave him. It is not even mentioned that his mother did, for, not to be irreverent, "that goes without saying." Doubtless she had forgiven him long before he set out for home, and indeed it is probable enough that it was the telepathy of her love and forgiveness that induced him to relinquish his foul living and return.

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Well, then, is it not obvious that with such love as this in the background no mother will patiently accept sympathy for her son's misdeeds? It will only anger her and rouse her to defend him, even though no defense be possible. If she is a womanish sort of woman, she will probably adopt the "*tu quoque*" form of resentment and say: "Yes, I know Harry has done a foolish thing, but it arose entirely from his desire to help and shield a friend. You must remember all young men are not like your John, always considering what is best for his own interests."

If she is not womanish, but womanly, the best you can expect is, "Thank you, but this is a subject upon which I do not wish to talk."

I was once speaking with a lady in London whose son had just been pursued and brought back from the continent under a charge of aggravated breach of trust when another lady came up and took her hand with a murmur of, "Dear Mrs. Blank, I want to tell you how sorry I am——" "What! You have heard of it

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already!" exclaimed Mrs. Blank, with a smile like the flash of a bayonet. Then half turning to me she continued: "I have lost my coachman, you know. Actually the poor fellow dropped dead in the stables this morning, and I am perfectly heartbroken. The best old soul that ever held a whip. He was my father's coachman, and actually put me on the first pony I ever rode. But I can't think how you heard of it so soon, my dear, except that I believe you make it a point to gather every bit of news that is stirring, don't you?" And with this little blow in the face Mrs. Blank sailed off, leaving her would-be sympathizer gasping.

But there is no need of swelling the list of cases where the truest sympathy is expressed by apparent ignorance of any cause for sympathy. Every person of delicacy or a sensitive organization will recognize such cases for themselves, and to those who are not delicate and sensitive in their own personality, no amount of teaching will effect the object. You cannot train a rhinoceros into a thin-skinned Arab

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steed, nor a cactus into a sensitive plant. Most people and most things die very much what they are born, and the clumsy sympathizer no doubt will exist when the world ceases, just as it did when it began to be.

But there are cases, and plenty of them, where true and tender sympathy is like the very dew of heaven upon the parched and drooping flowers. There are tender souls that long for sympathy, just as a little child holds up its hurt finger for every one to "kiss and make well." To such persons, and to sorrow of the ordinary outspoken sort, with no tinge of shame about it, let us give sympathy with a free and generous hand. But, above all, let it be the right of *kind* sympathy. It is in many cases, if not in all, more blessed to give than to receive, and this applies to gifts of sympathy quite as much as to more tangible matters.

I once knew a lady who said she had been to church all her life, but had not been able to acquire grace sufficient to enjoy being pitied by anybody for anything. Of course this was

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pride, and pride is naughty, but very universal. Sometimes it takes the form of *amour propre*, which is something a little different from self-love, although that is the only English equivalent for the phrase. But *amour propre* is a very delicate thing to handle. Sometimes it is hurt by being touched; sometimes it is still more hurt by being let alone; sometimes such a person as this wants to be sympathized with, and yet is irritably watchful lest the sympathy they demand should seem to place them at fault for their misfortune.

You say to such a one, "How could you trust that man when every one said he was dishonest?" and the sufferer nearly flies in your face with the assertion that she is no more credulous than other people; but, etc.

It is, in one word, a very dangerous and delicate matter either to give or receive sympathy, and all I can say is, remember, like fire, water and gunpowder, it is a good thing so long as you know how to manage it, but if you don't—for heaven's sake, let it alone.

XIII.

WOMEN OF THE WORLD.

DON'T you occasionally meet some good, honest, stupid man—sometimes, but not often, a woman instead of a man—who really cannot take in a new idea? You propound it to him, and he laughs in a good-natured, indulgent sort of way and shakes his head, which, by the way, is generally a fat and red-skinned head, a little bald on top, and says:

“Yes, yes, that’s your fancy, but there’s nothing in it, you know. It’s all been settled long ago, and pretty well settled, too—pretty well settled, too.”

Now, did it ever occur to you that such a man is a very fair type of the world at large? Of course the exterior varies. In Italy, Spain, France and other Latin countries the speaker is

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lean and dark and melancholy instead of jolly. He shrugs his shoulders, and raises his eyebrows, and throws out his hand, with the fingers spreading like the sticks of a fan, and in his own musical tongue enunciates the very same idea with the Anglo Saxon:

“It is all settled long ago. What has been will be. There is no room or need for change. *Patienza!*”

When a Latin says *patienza* it means that he absolutely won't even think about doing what you wish to have him do, or even try to listen to your arguments in favor of the new course. It is very exasperating, but not quite so much so as the good-natured chuckle, often accompanied with the rattle of small currency in the trousers pockets, of the middle-aged Anglo-Saxon.

Both the one and the other are simply voicing the prevailing sentiment of their species about many matters, and chief of them just now about the proper place of women in the world.

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Long ago, so says our friend, especially the middle-aged Anglo-Saxon, this was all settled.

Woman, lovely creature, was designed like the daisies to modestly ornament and embellish the path of man. She was to love, honor and obey, if she was permitted to marry him, and she was to serve and obey him under all circumstances and in every relationship. While she was young and pretty, man would admire and flatter her, even going to great lengths of folly in proving to her how much he loved her so long as she remained out of reach. But once she yielded to his frantic solicitations and became "the crown of his existence," the programme changed entirely. If a crown of existence, after a few years it was in the fashion of an old hat—soft and pliable, easy to wear around home, but none too good to be tossed into a corner or "hung up" indefinitely when its wearer chose to go out into the world.

But the world turns over every day, and in spite of gravitation and cohesion and various other laws of nature, things do get occasionally

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turned upside down and "a little mixed." Certainly it is a pity—that is, from the masculine point of view—that Galileo ever arose to interfere with the good old order of things when the solid plane of earth stood still and a man might know what to expect. But so it is. There is always some troublesome creature ready to suggest things are not what they seem nor what it has always been convenient to believe they were.

"It does move, nevertheless," remarked Galileo, as he signed his recantation of just this heretical error, and woman—nay, let us give her the biggest capital in the composing box, and say Woman—is just the same sort of revolutionist as was Galileo. Very calm and gentle and rather timid, so that she may even be coaxed or bullied into signing a recantation of her firmest convictions, but always sweetly murmuring as she does so: "Nevertheless it does move."

So, having acquired some new ideas in the course of this Galileoistic revolution and rebel-

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lion, lovely woman began to wonder why her sphere was necessarily a very small and monotonous circle, too much resembling the sphere of a horse in a cider mill, and why it should not be an ellipse, a rhomboid, a parabola, and anything in or outside of geometry, so long as it was something big and free and universal. Woman's sphere! Why not talk of man's sphere, and be always worrying around and fussing and fretting to see that he does not get out of it? Man's sphere is the sphere of the world—nay, of the universe—so far as he has ability to grasp it. Then why isn't woman's sphere just the same? Her character and capacities are very much like those of man, although, like him, she as a sex ranges through many grades of capacity and intelligence. Some women are childish and silly. Some men are fools. Some women are governed by feeling and by personal prejudice; but surely more men are governed by prejudice, with not even the excuse of personal grounds, but merely blind and unreasoning. As for feeling, I will acknowledge that few men

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are governed by their hearts in worldly matters, but most of them are ruled by their pockets, and perhaps that tribunal is neither nobler nor safer than the woman's feelings. Whatever the right or wrong of the matter, however, the fact remains that woman has rather abruptly but very decidedly enlarged and readjusted her sphere until it has become, like that of man, practically unlimited except by individual capacity.

This position being granted—and I will say, in all courtesy, whether it is granted or not—it becomes essential to also readjust some other things before one can with no faltering voice define woman's future position in the world.

Man's estimate of woman is one of the things needing readjustment. I have clearly set forth his long established, hereditary convictions, or rather prejudices, in the matter—those dear old prejudices to which he clings as did the deacon to his "one hoss shay," until some fine day when all at once they crumble into dust beneath him, and he remains seated among the ruin in

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an attitude at once mournful and ridiculous.

Would it not be better, dear sir, before that day comes, to provide a new and modern vehicle and respectfully put the old "shay" into a museum or lumber room? Only don't let your new "kirredge" be a sulky, I beg of you!

But descending—or ascending—from metaphor to plain statement and prognostication, it has become essential to the prosperity of the world in the immediate future that men as a sex should radically change their point of view with regard to this question. Women can no longer be set aside with a caress or pushed aside with a scowl or walked over as if unseen and unknown outside of their old treadmill. They have developed during the last score of years into a new and thus far unclassified power. Like the electric fluid, woman presents to the astonished and rather frightened gaze of her comrade, man, a force far surpassing any other yet known, and capable of revolutionizing all existing processes if only it can be equipped with safe machinery and so far comprehended

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as to be trusted to work after the desired methods.

Thus far man, the lord of creation, has been rather worsted, or, as some people say, "bested," by both electricity and femininity, but it is to be hoped that, following the precept to "live and learn," he will finally evolve the true meaning of the puzzle just now presented by both. When that time comes, the world having hitherto bumped along very lamely and painfully over the corduroy road of prejudice and precedent, with half its wheels rendered useless by a chain drag, will begin to travel not only more comfortably, but more expeditiously, and the passengers will find themselves able to think and talk of something outside the discomforts of the passage.

Woman's position in the world of the future will be a good deal like the position of the yeast in a mass of dough—pervading the otherwise heavy and lifeless material with energy and impulse, developing resources unused and perhaps unsuspected, lifting the whole substance

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from mere material into the wholesome food of man, the traditional "staff of life." In the social world she has already done this, and with more and more authority. In the literary world she has marched in her army of occupation and taken up good, solid ground, fully intrenched and fortified by "works" that no engineer can afford to despise. From this serene stronghold she sends out her advanced guard, her corps of construction, her light skirmishers, and occasionally under some able leader a little body of veterans, who intrench themselves upon some new vantage ground, which they hold calmly and impregnably, in spite of all warning cries and shrieks that they have passed beyond their sphere and must retreat.

In the world of art woman has also defined her position as a living and growing power. Men have always encouraged the idea that a cultivated woman should know something about art—that is, she should be able to tell the work of one artist from another and should be able to intelligently follow his instructions

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in the matter of forming tastes and opinions. Also it was nice for a lady to be able to make pretty little pencil sketches of a tree and a pond, an impossible cottage in the background. Sometimes she might aspire to water colors and have a dear little portfolio of washy views to exhibit to him of an evening. A few eccentric and strong minded young women were capable perhaps of copying in oil color the pictures originated by men, and might, in fact, be permitted to do so, if they were accompanied to the galleries by some elder female or suitable male guardian, for, of course, being a woman, she would not have sense or self-respect enough to protect herself.

But now that women come forward as artists, not copyists; now that more than one woman has said, "If Rosa Bonheur can, why cannot I?" now that it is more and more clearly proved day by day that a woman's intuitive perception of character and daring analysis, added to her facile touch and delicate feeling, makes her the best portrait painter in the world if she has

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the artistic endowment, why, now, poor bewildered man has to drop his dear old time-honored statement that woman never invents, but simply copies; that she is only the moon to his sun and all the rest of it. If she can divine and put into form the soul of a man instead of simply copying his lineaments, what is to hinder her from painting the soul of nature and the true inwardness of events?

But now at last woman presents herself in the world of business, and not as an employee or as a capitalist simply, but in all capacities. She modestly feels and pleasantly says that there is really nothing beyond her capacity in any form of business with which man has hitherto coped. She feels herself competent to discuss bonds and stocks and loans, and even the silver question and tariff.

She sees nothing beyond her in the question of manufactures or of imports. She can gauge the values of teas and sugars and spices in bulk as well as by retail. She is no more alarmed by a bale of cloth or a case of silk or cartons of

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lace than she is by a single yard of these fabrics. She is quite aware that several women have ventured into the business world upon an extended scale, and have come to grief and sometimes to obloquy, but she gently inquires if the rash pioneers of a new advance are to be taken as just specimens of the army behind, or if because a short time ago an unlicensed mob hurled themselves upon the new lands just open to the people it is proved that our western country cannot be decently settled?

Women have come into the business world heavily handicapped by the precedents and the prejudices of man, who, having hitherto had everything his own way, naturally desires to keep it so. This he calls being conservative.

Also woman is handicapped by her own inexperience. She is a good deal in the case of one who, having long laid bound and blinded, suddenly receives sight and freedom. She is dazed and dizzy for the moment, but only for the moment, and, trust me, she will never again return to the blindness or the bondage. Her

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place henceforth is shoulder to shoulder, side by side with man, his comrade, his equal, his true helpmeet in each and every world into which mankind may enter—the other half without which he can never be a whole, and this dear old world of ours can never attain its true perfection of attainment.

XIV.

WOMAN'S YOUTH.

SAYS the proverb: "A woman is as old as she looks, and a man is as young as he feels," but like many other widely accepted "glittering generalities," it will not walk on all fours. For even a girl of fifteen may have an old look and a woman of fifty may have a young look, and a supersensitive person, especially if she lives in the rush and whirl of a city life, will look years younger or older in a few hours, according to her environment. It is one of the oddest things in this queer world, this importance attached to the question of age. The first thing we ask about a proposed acquaintance is: What age is he or she? The commonest form of social gossip is the telling in confidence of the age of some lady who is older than she appears. The one item mentioned in a

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burial notice is the age of the deceased, and a very frequent remark when a death is announced is, I wonder if they will print her age!

Another curious point is that dislike or malice always exaggerates the age of its object, and kindly or charitable feeling always minimizes it. It is evident, then, that we all desire for ourselves and our friends the reputation of youth, and that there is something disparaging and unattractive in speaking of a person as old, or even middle-aged. Arising from this instinct, no doubt, we have the struggle to appear young so noticeable and so piteous not only in what we call society, but in all classes of the community.

I sat mournfully by one day at a milliner's while she tried a blue satin and velvet sailor hat with long streamers on a lady of about fifty years old, whose weight must certainly have reached two hundred, and whose great red face suggested unlimited roast beef and port wine. The lady bought the hat and went away, and I

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mildly inquired of the milliner if she really thought it was the most suitable headgear she could have recommended. She smiled shrewdly and said: "The only other thing she would look at was a *bébé* bonnet, and that, she concluded, was too old for her. She does not realize that she is no longer fifteen."

That little incident made a deep impression on me, as throwing a broad light upon one phase of feminine human nature. The woman does not, or will not, "realize that she is no longer fifteen," and struggles to prevent other people from realizing it either. Is it, then, so much better to be fifteen than fifty, and why?

Why should one cling to sailor hats and *bébé* bonnets instead of assuming the rich and dignified headgear of middle life? Why is youth the one thing to be struggled and fought for against all odds? And how is it women, otherwise sensible can yield to the delusion that youthful dress lends a youthful appearance to middle age? Looking about me to see how these questions were answered by the elder ladies of my ac-

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quaintance, I was considerably puzzled to determine which they were. Many of the girls and women, whose ages I happened to know, looked older in both form and figure than others whom I suspected to be their seniors, and again I found that many of my acquaintances varied so much from time to time that I had to place them afresh at each interview.

But, after all, what is the charm of youth? Is it physical simply? Of course, clear eyes and skin, round, firm outlines, and a certain freshness of lips and cheek are very lovely, but it is by no means all young girls, especially in cities, who possess them. Is it manners? There is nothing sweeter than the half-timid, yet well-trained manner of an ingenuous girl, nothing prettier than her *naïve* deference to her elders and ready self-effacement; but still I must prefer for my own part the gracious tact and quickness that come only by experience, the ready adjustment of any little social awkwardness, the self-poise that knows just what to say and do and leave undone of the mature man

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or woman. And surely it is not the intellect and conversational powers of youth to which we so lovingly cling. The crude ideas, the impossible theories, the innocent conviction of originality while uttering the baldest truisms, the misplaced credulity or the sweeping iconoclasm—are these the conditions of mental development in which we would remain?

What then? For, spite of all my wasted words, spite of the reason one can bring to bear upon the matter, the foolish fact remains, and no doubt will remain, that youth is a possession to be clung to as long as possible and feigned as much longer as may be.

But since feigning is useless and long possession is impossible, why will not those who no longer are young consent to beautify and enrich middle age with own attractions? Why do not those who have outgrown the sailor hats invent and wear charming bonnets, carefully suited to the new conditions? Why does not Miss Chick cease to babble childishly, and study to have something to say that will really amuse or

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please or attract the men of her own age, dan so leave the boys alone? When shall we say of a friend: "Oh, she is charming. You will like her ever so much, for she is fifty years old, and has all the varied means of making herself agreeable that her years naturally bring. She has seen so much and read so much and thought so much that it is a liberal education to know her." Ah, when?

Au contraire, I once asked an Englishman if he did not think a certain lady of about thirty years old very pretty.

"Pretty! Why, she's gray as a badger," replied he, referring to the few threads of silver that gave piquancy to her fresh, bright face.

But the old man or woman who has had the tact and the wit to see the question in its true light, and deal with it intelligently, and who has grown old gracefully and wisely, is a treasure not enough to be valued by those who enjoy it. For there is a ripened sweetness in such a life, a calm acceptance of those evils or sorrows against which we younger ones struggle

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so wildly and so hopelessly; a peace passing understanding that, like an attar, diffuses itself on every side; experience, wisdom and judgment, that only long years ending in quiet thoughtfulness can give.

Have you such a mother or such a grandmother? Make much of her, love her, tell her that you love her, cherish her at once reverently and tenderly; let every day that passes add to the store of happy memories laid by for the time when her chair shall be vacant, her dear, tremulous hand forever still, and her voice forever hushed. And remember as your own years pile themselves one upon another that they are building the monument whereby in the future those who come after will remember you, and let them not say as they turn from it with a pitying smile, she did not realize that she was no longer fifteen.

XV.

OLD MAIDS.

IT does not take a very long or wide experience of society to wear off the first surprise at some of its "words and ways," and to teach one the folly of "getting mad" over what cannot be helped. Still there are some occasions when the original Adam within me gets the better of training, and one of them is suggested by the heading of this paper.

The very last time that I was at a reception ill fortune pushed me into a corner with a "gilded youth" who would not go away or let me do so; a pair of lovely eyes smiled amusement over his shoulder and a crisply sweet voice exchanged with me a word of greeting. Eyes and voice belonged to one of the most charming women of New York, more than thirty years old and unmarried.

"Oh, Miss So-and-so," exclaimed my com-

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pauion, looking after her and trying to find his mustache to pull. "Too bad she's 'Miss' still, isn't it? I should think that a nice woman like that would have found *some one* to marry her."

"That's what I am always saying of Mr. Timon, over there," said I, glancing at a society man, perhaps forty years old, just passing us. "He is very rich, very handsome, agreeable, cultured and wide awake. I should think, before this, he would have found *some* woman to marry him."

"Timon! Why, he could be married any day he chose!" exclaimed my artless companion. "The women are all wild after him! It is he that says no, not they."

"And does it not occur to you that Miss So-and-so may be the one to say no literally and verbally, and to say it very often?" demanded I. "Why should a woman with ample income, pleasant family surroundings, wit, beauty and the choice of society in any part of the world, bind herself down to the companionship of a man who will probably weary her, possibly ill-

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treat her and never, by any chance comprehend her? Of course, if she chances to be in love with him, that is a different matter, for the world is well lost for love. But why cannot you men understand that very many women make a great—a very great sacrifice—in marrying any man at all, and that no woman receives anything more than she gives in marriage, and as a general thing, not so much!"

But is it not true? Do not *all* men, and alas, some women, speak of an "old maid" or one verging toward that condition in terms of pity, and, if she is at all attractive, of surprise?

Why cannot men understand that there are other pleasures in life besides that of worshipping them?

A bright woman, especially if well educated and traveled, generally has to keep a tight rein in talking to the average society man, or she will ride away from him, leaving him angrily humiliated in the rear. Or he will loftily adopt himself to her lower plane and instruct her, in a confused and elementary fashion, upon mat-

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ters of which she has seen the "true inwardness" a long time before. It is really very seldom that she meets a man so thoroughly her equal or superior that it is a privilege for her to exchange ideas with him, and she is quite sharp enough to know that in married life there are a great many hours when a stupid man, or a groveling-minded man, or a conceited man, or a protoplasmic man is about as agreeable a companion as the brutal ruffian chained for life to the educated forger, brought to the galleys by a mistaken use of advanced capacities.

No, don't continue to say:

"Too bad she's single still!" but change the formula to:

"Pity she never found any man worth accepting, when there are such hosts of them in the world."

XVI.

THE SOCIETY GIRL AS A WIFE.

YEARS ago the favorite scheme of the novelist was to demonstrate that no woman of fashion had a heart, and that girls trained in luxury and educated by the example of fashionable mothers could not possibly become good wives, especially for poor men. But is this so?

Persons born and bred in luxury have their faults, but so do persons born and bred in penury, and I do not know that one class of faults is any more tolerable or more likely to make a girl into a bad wife than the other.

The fashionable girl, for instance, has been used all her life to attendance, and probably never has learned to mend her own clothes, or to go and fetch what she wants, or to wait upon anybody else. She sees a thing in a shop, and having plenty of pocket money, or plenty of

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credit in her father's name, she orders it sent home, and perhaps never looks twice at it again. If she is properly brought up she devotes most of her time and energy to study and the practice of various accomplishments, which, with necessary exercise, so fills her day that she really could not if she would learn anything of practical matters—of the art of keeping a house, of training servants or of doing without them, of buying clothes at the right time and to the best advantage, of making those clothes or so repairing and refreshing them as to

**“ Mak’ auld claitthes
A’maist as good’s the new.”**

Of course if a girl so trained marries a poor man she has a great deal both to learn and to unlearn, and her capacity for these new lessons will be the measure of her ability to become a good wife.

But suppose such a girl marries a rich man? We all know, especially in this country, that money alone will not make a comfortable

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home; it will hire servants sometimes at tremendous wages, but the air of this free country is fatal to servitude, and the man or maid who while at home in England or Ireland was the very incarnation of obedience, respectfulness and content, only requires a few months in one of our cities, with the advantage of reading the papers before they reach the hands of the family, and of listening to the lessons of their compatriots who have been here a little longer, before they imbibe the principles of liberty and equality to such an extent, that, unless the heads of the house are well able to hold their own position, they speedily lose it, and become the servants rather than the rulers.

Now is a girl fresh from her school, or even after some years of society life, able to take and keep this position of head of a turbulent and revolutionary staff of servants simply because her husband has the money to pay them?

Of course she is not, unless she has had a mother so very unusually alive to her responsibilities that she has taught her the art of house-

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keeping, in addition to her school studies and the requirements of society; and such mothers are, to say the least of it, uncommon.

So our poor society girl is not by position and education fitted to become the wife either of a poor man or of a rich one.

Is she then never to be a successful wife? Are both poor men and rich men warned off from trying to appropriate her delicate loveliness and dainty grace to the embellishment of that *home* for which every man longs in his inmost heart?

Nay, the case is not quite as bad as this for our dear society rosebuds and half-opened blossoms. There is a teacher who can in quite a short course of most delightful lessons teach the most inexperienced girl, whether she be city bred and luxurious, or whether she be country bred and unsophisticated, to lay aside all her previous habits and to acquire a complete new set; to take up the most tedious and distasteful tasks and find them charming; to like the things she supposed she should abhor, and to

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grow careless of what had been her very breath of life.

His terms are high, to be sure, this wonderful teacher of ours; he demands even more than Shylock with his pound of flesh, for he is not satisfied with less than the whole being of his pupil—her heart, her brain, her hands, her feet, her will and her obedience; in fact, all that makes her herself. The teacher's name, as you long since have guessed, is Love, dear, old, yet ever young, Dan Cupid, who has been at work among us from the day when this weary old world was as fresh and young as the *débutante* of yesterday.

And now the crucial question is, Can the fashionable girl, the society girl, take the course Master Love requires? She has, perhaps, "gone in" for the higher mathematics, for Greek and even Hebrew; she knows the principles of navigation, trigonometry and astronomy; she has strained her poor little brain to its utmost capacity, and is quite fit to assume the chair of mathematics at the coming college for the com-

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ing woman, but is she able to learn Love's sweet lessons and to graduate in his school?

Those old novelists and essayists, those compounders of gilded pills who write moral tales for the young and novels with an educational purpose, in fact, all the class of theorists to whom I at first referred, say no, she can't. They maintain that a worldly life makes the whole nature worldly; they say that artificial habits, such as sleeping half the day, and waking more than half the night, so upset and transform the natural tastes and capacities that they languish and die and are supplanted by others adapted to the new order of things. If this is true, a fashionable girl cannot learn of love any more than a blind girl could truly understand the beauty of nature, or a deaf one appreciate the chorus of birds on a summer morning.

But I, for one, am not ready to grant that this is the truth. I have seen, I have known girls trained in the lap of luxury and the vortex of fashionable life who have learned to love so truly, so purely, and so naturally that the arti-

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ficial character, that seemed to be their only one, has utterly changed its complexion and build, and the pupil of Love has graduated as a wife with brilliant success. Let us look a little at the course of study.

Society teaches selfishness; the object of each individual is to surpass a little every other individual in the dearest object of ambition. With the men, this object is wealth, or political importance, or some form of worldly ambition leading to power and prominence. With the women, it is social leadership, authority in matters of dress, the reputation of entertaining with splendor and success, beauty, style, or fascinating manner, acquaintance with the mighty personages of the earth, and all the minor details of their lives.

Now the attainment of the first place in all these matters involves the pushing somebody else back into the second place, and if this is not selfishness what can be?

But Love's first lesson is unselfishness! His pupil must learn to put herself in the back-

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ground and consider what will make another person happy or be to his advantage; she must hold her own plans and wishes in so light a grasp that she can instantly relinquish them and take up another set originating in another will. She must learn to think very lightly of her own ideas and convictions, and accept with delight and admiration those she has never dreamed of or has looked upon as quite erroneous. She must learn to look upon her own beauty, grace and acquirements as only valuable because somebody else values them, and not in the least because they are her own and add to her own importance.

Yes, Love teaches unselfishness, and if one takes the full course, and acquires it thoroughly, as, alas! few have strength to do, he adds sincerity, tact, docility, silence under provocation, patience, sweetness, energy, and untiring determination to do and to be whatever will make the beloved one happy, and a holy hypocrisy in disguising all the disappointments, self-sacrifices and changes of purpose involved in giving

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up one's life to become the counterpart of another life.

But where a nature is strong enough, and at the same time yielding enough, to take the whole course and learn every lesson to the end, which is also the end of life, that woman, be she a fashionable girl or a country girl, will make a good wife and become the delight and joy of her husband, although he probably will never half appreciate her, for it is one of the many contradictions of the masculine nature that the more perfect a woman is the less they admire and try to please her. A perfect woman, or one as nearly perfect as we ever find in this world of imperfection, must either be satisfied with the approval of her own sex, who do as a general thing appreciate and admire her, or, if she remains in Love's school and faithful to his guidance, he will keep her supplied with rose-colored glasses through which not only the man she loves, but her own life and the sacrifices she makes for him, and his stolid acceptance of those sacrifices will all show in a soft radiance,

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a lovely Claude Lorraine effect which can transform the most stupid landscape, the most commonplace surroundings, into a scene of ideal beauty.

Civilization does not materially change the basis of human nature, and fashionable life is not half so powerful an agent for good or bad as unfashionable people are apt to think. I have known a good many men and women on both sides of the Atlantic who would no doubt be marked as leaders of society—the typical fashionable people, although, by the way, society objects just now to the term fashionable, and, especially in London, holds itself aloof from and far above those to whom it sets fashions in its own arbitrary mode. But, however you may style them, these are the people who hold themselves at the head of the social system in the great centers of civilization, and, having studied them a good deal and rather critically, I am quite ready to aver that they are just men and women like the rest of us.

The men like to fancy themselves wiser than

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other men, and are most charmed by those who most defer to them; they are suspicious in the wrong place, and easily binded and led by the women who know how to do it; they are highly polished on the surface, and rather coarse and material under the surface; in fact, they are like all other men. And the women love to be admired for whatever charms they pride themselves upon most highly, love to see men turn from other women to them, love to be attended to and sought out, love to be loved. This is the basis of feminine human nature, and whether it is covered up by the silks and laces of a fashionable woman, or is hidden in the folds of muslins and woolen, and the pretty devices of a girl's own fingers and happy inventions because she has no money to buy those of other people, it is always the *woman* who is underneath, and who, when the man and the hour arrive, breaks forth fresh and radiant as Galatea from her marble under Pygmalion's touch.

Do you see the kernel of the whole matter? Do you know exactly how I reply to the ques-

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tion you have asked me, as to whether a fashionable life destroys the capacity for true love?

I say no, not if the original nature of the fashionable girl is capable of love. In such a one the power of love will transform the nature, and from what has seemed dead and cold, and bound in an impenetrable husk of conventional-ity, will evolve a sweet and gracious growth, as the flower springs from the seed that to ignorant eyes gave no promise of containing such a treasure.

But alas! some seeds are sterile; some natures have no capacity for love; some pupils go to the great master's school and learn nothing but some parrot phrases, some poor smattering of their lesson, some imitation of what they hear their fellow pupils so joyously recite. They soon leave school, and they leave it just about as ignorant as they entered it; they have no capacity for learning, and they do not even know that there was anything more to learn than their own poor hollow phrases.

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For such a pupil it does not matter whether she were bred in the lap of luxury or in the barren home of poverty; she cannot love, and so she cannot be a good wife for a poor man or a rich one. She has missed the aim of her existence, for, no matter what heights the coming woman may attain, or what power she may wield, she will never get beyond that old, old axiom, the true creed of womanhood—"The greatest thing in the world is love."

XVI.

THE DECEITS OF LOVE.

NE of the advantages proposed to themselves by those ingenious persons who "make love" to other persons of the opposite sex is the coming into possession of a kindred soul to which he or she may communicate every thought as it arises, find an echo for every opinion, and sympathy for each emotion.

Those of us who have ever experienced the tender passion probably "have our opinion" as to the working advantages of this theory. We know how easy it is to find a soul, kindred or otherwise, of which it is wise or profitable to make a mirror of our own, and have proved quite thoroughly the comfort of expressing each sentiment as it arises, our likes and dislikes, wishes, prejudices, and opinions. Let me state

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just here, for fear of misapprehension, that in the words of Artemus Ward, "this is intended to be sarkastikal," and that my sober and serious opinion is, that this absolute sincerity and perfect unity of mind, speech and conviction is merely one of those rose-colored delusions hanging like sunrise clouds about the dawn of love, and sure to be dispelled when the orb of light either arises in his strength or goes behind a cloud.

People who have found time to study the subject say that no two leaves upon a tree, no two flowers upon a stalk, no two pebbles or grains of sand or crystals upon the shore, are exactly alike, but the microscope, if not the naked eye, will discern enough difference to insure individuality, and it is said that a trained shepherd knows every one of the sheep in a flock of hundreds as positively as his wife does the lambs of her nursery. And if grains of sand, leaves and sheep each have an individuality, and can never become precise fac-similes of each other, is it not rather a foolish idea to try to force two per-

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sonalities into the same mold; and shouldn't we suppose even lovers might retain sense enough to see that their two minds, hearts or souls are and will remain two, and would be valueless if they were only the half of one, as they persist in calling them?

Frederic likes Limburger cheese and lager beer; Laura detests both, and dotes upon caramels and sweet champagne. A little lunch is in question, and Laura insists upon the Limburger and lager, "because I like everything you do, darling," and so makes herself ill for the day. Frederic does not generally imitate this example, for, while a man may be quite willing to surrender his politics, his religion and his literary tastes to the lady of his love—that is, for a little while—he does not, as a general thing, sacrifice his stomach; and if Laura is not quite bereft of common sense she will not ask him to do so, for, even if he complies with her request, he will never forgive either himself or her.

And why should she attempt the folly of

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forcing her own palate into identity with his? And why should she pretend to succeed? And why, with her little nose pink in its effort not to curl up at the scent of the cheese, and her eyes red and watery with her effort to quaff the effervescent beer, should she perjure herself by declaring that she likes it "ever so much," and prefers it to champagne and frozen pudding just as much as he does? Frederic, probably, does not believe her, and thinks her a little fool for her pains, or, if he does believe her, fails to feel any gratitude or admiration for the conversion. His highest meed of praise is, "That's where you show your good sense, my dear," and if the cheese lingers in her breath or the beer reddens her nose, he is ever so faintly repelled by the likeness to himself.

They go out and meet Araminta, who is much prettier than Laura. Frederic appreciates the fact, and when Laura jealously taxes him with it he swears he doesn't think so at all, didn't know they met her, never noticed her costume, had forgotten the color of her eyes.

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Now if, like Laura, Frederic is resolved that there shall be only one mind and one taste between them, he should reply: "Yes, my dear, Araminta is far prettier than you, and her dress is far richer and more stylish. We appreciate the fact, and we hate her for it, and wish we could deny it." But perfect frankness in this case would probably not conduce to perfect harmony, and Frederic is too wise to attempt it, although in avoiding Scylla he tumbles into Charybdis, and disparages the rival beauty so much as to leave the impression that he is concealing a far greater admiration than he really possesses.

What, then, should he do or say, and by what cunningly devised deceit of love shall he conceal the fact that he perceives Araminta's beauty, while still loyal to Laura? For my part, I have no answer ready, for I never yet have met a man clever enough to disguise his true sentiments upon such subjects. And here let me once more warn the Frederics—that is to say, the lovers and admirers among the male

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sex—that even a very silly little woman is generally acute enough to follow the workings of a man's mind in matters relating to herself, and sees through those little deceits and pretenses of his far quicker than he can fathom her similar arts.

Supposing a case like the above, I really think a judicious sincerity is better than attempt at diplomacy. “Yes, Araminta is very handsome, no doubt, and I dare say the crowd would admire her more than they do you; but I am not the crowd; I am your lover, and to me you are the woman of the world. Let Araminta and the crowd go by; I am satisfied so long as you remain.”

Some such speech as this, *truthfully* uttered, will be to most women far more “fetching” than a wholesale disparagement of their rival, which they *know* must be insincere.

Another very common class of the deceits of love is for either the man or the woman to feign virtues they do not possess, and do not really care to acquire except for the occasion. The

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admirer, with matrimony in his eye, is invited to visit at the home of the fair one who, although as sweetly unconscious as a lamb cropping daisies, understands perfectly why he is there and what he intends. How amiable and gentle she is with her little brothers! How attentive and dutiful to her mother! How bright and patient under her big brother's teasing! How quick to see that papa is tired, and give him his slippers, his newspaper, his favorite seat. With what filial piety she listens to her maiden aunt's thrice-told tales, and finds grandmamma's spectacles.

It is not all deceit, of course. She feels happy, and the world has long since amended the old proverb into "Be happy and you'll be good," and fully conscious that critical eyes and ears follow her every action, she takes pleasure in making it an admirable one.

But if this new departure comes from no deeper motive; if, in fact, it is only one of the deceits of love, it is worse than useless, for there is nothing more murderous to love than

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the knowledge that it has been obtained by false pretenses.

If, courtship over and marriage established, the bride gradually drops all the amiable and ready observances that so pleased her lover; if a nipping and peevish temper succeeds to the sweet patience he has admired; if she is careless and negligent toward her parents, now that there is nothing more to gain from them; if she shows herself selfish and indolent and unsympathetic toward himself, she may be sure that his disillusionment will be all the more rapid and thorough because he had been led to believe in other things.

No, if a girl begins by deceiving her lover as to her own character she had better resolve, in the interest of her own comfort, to keep up the deceit for life, and never let him find out that any other course is possible to her. She may, in fact, very wisely adapt to her own career the advice, "If you are going to tell a lie, tell a good one, and then stick to it."

And I have seen cases where this course has

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been so successfully pursued that the husband and the former friends of his wife remained at variance for life as to her character; one looked upon the golden, and the other upon, let us say, the (German) silver of the shield, and neither could believe that the other saw straight.

I do not think men, even when in love, make such wholesale pretense of a "change of heart" as this. In the first place, they seldom think their own faults are objectionable, and in the next they have a lordly fashion of expecting the women to accept them, faults and all.

"How your coat always smells of tobacco smoke!" says she, making a little *moue* as she withdraws from close contact with said coat.

"Oh, no, it doesn't; I went up in the smoking room at the club, but the wind has blown it all away—you don't smell it," replies he, which statement can hardly be called a deceit, but is often satisfactory to the weaker vessel.

No, men's deceits of love are more generally with regard to the shady corners of their lives, past or present. Probably no woman ever ac-

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cepted a man's love without at once demanding a confession as to his ever having proffered love to any other woman, etc.

Now there are very few men, very few indeed, who both can and will answer these questions truthfully. Sometimes there are tender memories which he shrinks from offering to his new love, as one might toss a ball to a kitten. Sometimes he has loved where he could not offer marriage, and honor demands that the whole affair shall remain secret, even from the wife of his later life. Sometimes there are dark and disgraceful secrets which it would be suicide to reveal, and sometimes, one is ashamed to confess, a man deliberately plans to carry on two lives, with one of which the innocent girl he asks to marry him has no concern.

In whichever of these channels the truth may run, it is pretty certain that it will not come to the surface in reply to the tender inquiries of the fair one, and it is only a very young or a very credulous woman who will believe, though he swear it, that her lover has never kissed other

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lips than hers, or whispered love to other ears. Nor, to my mind, is it altogether desirable that it should be true; the nature of man is versatile, and his appetite is omnivorous; his teeth are adapted for the tearing of lamb as well as for the mashing of strawberries and cherries. If he has never tasted the one or the other, be sure his instinct will impel him to do so first or last, and it is better that it should have been before we knew him than after we have committed our own hearts to his keeping.

But if this omnivorous appetite has been fully tested, and if the strawberries appeal to the palate more highly than the stronger meats, there is a certain amount of probability of constancy in the last direction so long as the delicate fruit retains its sweet and alluring flavor. But how foolish of the human strawberry to insist upon those grinders saying they had never crushed meat, or those incisors that they had never cut into an apple or a banana!

A man cannot be sincere as to his past experiences if he is no better than the average man,

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and to insist upon his being so is to drive him into a labyrinth of deceit, where to be sure he is generally quite content to dwell. But this deceit is utterly unjustifiable and unpardonable when it concerns not only the past but the present and the proposed future.

A man, like a woman, may, under the influence of a real love, assume a character which has never hitherto been his; he may resolve sincerely to close the gates of those dark ways wherein he has hitherto walked, and to let his future path be open to the light of day and to the closest scrutiny of his wife's eyes; and although he does not quite truthfully reply to the inquisition she is sure to make into his ancient history, he may be forgiven if he is really going to make the future as fair as he is now representing the past.

So the moral of that is, my dear sisters, don't be too severe upon the deceits of love, however transparent you may find them, so long as it is your own unwise persistence that has forced them upon your lover.

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But there are other deceits practiced by both sexes, especially by lovers who are no longer young—little deceits as to age, as to infirmities, as to weariness, as to former experiences, in fact as to all landmarks that might reveal just how much of life's course has been traversed, and, although neither party is very much deceived, he or she accepts the other's little pretenses on the tacit understanding that his or her own shall pass muster.

“ You tickle me, Billy; tickle me, do;
You tickle me, Billy, and I'll tickle you! ”

But saddest of all deceits of love, because it is only of self-love, is the picture of an apparition that does not exist. A girl brought up in the worship of the world, and its needs and amusements, all of which require money, has the opportunity of marrying a man who can give her all these things if she will give him her youth and beauty and—her love. The latter is perhaps already bestowed, perhaps it has not yet awakened, perhaps it is altogether

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wanting. At any rate she must feign it, or she cannot complete her share of the bargain. Well, women can generally do whatever they set their hands to, and this among the rest, but is it not true that no deceit of love is so pitiful as this feigning of a love that does not exist? None so pitiful and none so transparent, although so often practiced that both you and I can think of more than one example—more's the pity of it, more's the pity!

XVII.

WOMAN'S COURAGE.

IT IS the accepted idea of the world that courage is a masculine attribute almost exclusive and that all women are timid creatures, needing all sorts of protection and support, shelter and encouragement from man, who, according to St. Paul, "is the head of the woman."

Perhaps he is, but I must say he does not always keep ahead.

Now, my own theory is that this idea, set up in the dark ages, when woman was either a slave or a servant to man, has, like many other respectable ideas, become outgrown and antiquated. The last fifty years have developed the nature and capacities of woman with a good deal of the instantaneous transformation seen in a pantomime when the clumsy hoyden suddenly develops into the fairy queen, all pink

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gauze, spangles and diamond-tipped wand, or, to put it more prettily, the effect upon a garden of roses, which in one hour of hot sunshine develop from half-blown buds into flowers of glorious and fragrant maturity.

If this blossoming goes on for another century at the rate it has begun in this, the women of the year 2000 will wonder what those quaint old writers of the nineteenth century could have meant by objecting to women as physicians, lawyers, preachers and legislators.

"Why, just fancy men trying to manage the world without the advice and direction of women!" some fair student of that day will exclaim. And another will add:

"And electricity only in its infancy! What vital force *was* there in those days to keep the world moving at all?"

Now, one of the errors which time has thus far perpetuated and now is ready to abjure and contradict, is this of the cowardice of women and courage of men as distinctly opposed to each other.

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I don't say but what, in the case of a mouse, a man is more courageous than a woman, and perhaps in that of a lion or tiger, although in the matter of mad dogs I recently had proof that the woman is the more courageous. I was visiting a suburban friend lately when a dog began to show ominous symptoms of madness just in front of the house. My friend called from the window to the man working on the lawn and bade him go at once and throw a pail of water over the poor beast. The man dropped his mower, came and looked at the dog, and flatly refused to approach him any nearer, saying in 'so many words that he was afraid to do so.

My friend reiterated the order, but to no effect, when of a sudden a brawny, red-armed woman dashed around the corner of the house, pail in hand, and made for the dog, who, after one dreadful backward glower at her, rushed off and was seen no more.

When the story was told at night to the master of the house, he commented on it by smiting

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his knee, laughing delightedly, and exclaiming: "Give me a woman every time when I want water poured over a mad dog. They don't know any better than to try it on. I hope you gave the cook a dollar, my dear."

Then I was present when a sweet little curly-haired thing, a girl of some twenty years old, seized a savage bloodhound by the neck and choked him off her pet kitten, which he had chased into the house—that is, I don't suppose her tiny dimpled hands were really capable of choking him, but he was so impressed by the dauntless spirit behind them that he dropped the kitten and ran.

When his master was told of the exploit, he turned pale and exclaimed: "My God! That dog has torn a man to pieces before now!"

The strongest spring of action in a woman's nature is love, and the perfectly reckless courage she will sometimes display must have its root in love. She must feel the need of saving or serving some one whose life is dearer to her than her own, or, like Joan of Arc or Charlotte

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Corday, she must love her country better than herself and despise the death awaiting her in its defense.

In fact, the truth is that man's courage is a matter of calculation, and so may be served to order, may be indulged or restrained, may be sold to the highest bidder, and if a higher appear may be transferred and resold without injuring its quality in the least. This is not to be taken as an ill-natured hit at mankind, but a simple statement of fact as relating to mercenary troops and soldiers of fortune, and I only point out the fact as opposed to that other fact just mentioned—namely, that woman's courage springs only from the personal feeling of the moment and has its root in love.

But, after all, it is more in the moral than the physical world that woman's courage is most clearly shown, and also man's cowardice, and in no direction more plainly than in matters of the heart.

Is it not so even in your own experience or observation?

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A man and woman are mutually attached, and are desirous of further acquaintance. Now, the theory is—a theory established by man and consented to by woman—that she, whether maid or widow, modestly conceals her preference, not confessing it even to herself, and throwing all sorts of obstacles in the way of her wooer, such as avoiding his society, pretending not to understand his advances, skillfully evading his attempts at a declaration, and when he has valiantly conquered the opportunity and confessed his love and offered his hand and heart the traditional woman is very much astonished at the unforeseen declaration, and in a tremor of sweet confusion utterly denies any reciprocal fondness. Then a siege begins wherein the man, bold, aggressive, persistent, demolishes the defensive works wherein the woman has intrenched herself, refuses to take no for an answer, and finally by courage and perseverance conquers all opposition and secures the prize.

Well, now I ask again, Are these the facts

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in the case, O woman, so far as you are able to testify?

You know they are not, I know they are not, and every woman in the world, if sufficiently civilized to know anything, knows they are not.

The man is attracted to the woman. He asks an introduction perhaps, and the acquaintance begins on his part with a vague feeling of distrust and curiosity. He does not in the very least understand this enchanting sphinx, and although confessing her charm in his heart is afraid of what she may develop. He has—that is, all sensible men have—an innate consciousness that the subtlety, the quickness, the unexpectedness of a woman's maneuvers are far out of reach of his comprehension, and he awaits what she will do and say with very much the feeling Watt and Fulton may have had when they first set their steam engines going and stood by in admiring awe, uncertain whether this wonderful new agent they had evoked would destroy them in one splendid flash or

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deign to follow their lead and prove a blessing to them and mankind.

Should the woman thus approached feel disposed to torment her tentative lover, she has a thousand ways of doing so. She laughs at his sentimental speeches. She fails to understand his clever compliments. She asks him ironical and teasing questions with an air of seraphic innocence and ingenuous desire for information. She entertains him with praises of his rival. She cares nothing for boasting, which is the end and aim of his being, and dotes upon horses, of which he knows nothing.

Then when she sees him utterly daunted and defeated, when she sees, in fact, that the courage which should have sustained him is utterly exhausted, and he is about to seek safety in flight, she flashes upon him a smile, a long, sweet look, a tone, a gesture, a word, and he is at her feet again.

Perhaps, on the other hand, the woman is attracted to the man who has hardly noticed her. She is not delayed in her approaches by

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any sense of doubt or mystery; she does not in the least look upon the object of her regard as a sphinx or a mystery; she is not at all afraid of him or of what he may do or say; she understands his nature, so far at least as she needs to for her present purposes, and she feels instinctively that she has the battle in her own hand; she goes into the fray—that is to say, into the sweet combat of love—with calm and assured courage, while he, as we have said, is tremulous with that fear of the unknown which is the most demoralizing of all fears. We will suppose that she really desires this man as a husband and does not, as in the former case, wish merely to amuse herself with conquering him. Her tactics are now altogether different, and the theory held by man of what a woman is and should be is based upon the course pursued by a woman in love who intends a permanent result from her passion.

She now shows herself gentle, docile, thirsting for information upon any subject the man fancies himself learned in, let it be boots or

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horses, Aristotle or Bismarck, pork or grain, or bonds, or theosophy, or finance. No matter which of these or a hundred more does he discourse upon, it is the one subject on which she has always longed to be informed, and she combines with the innocent ignorance of the dove so much of the wise intelligence and quickness of the serpent that the man, fooled to the top of his bent, is presently ready to declare that such sweet and suggestive sympathy is precisely what he has always needed to enable him to carry out his life's work, and if he can only secure it as his own, etc.

Or, if the declaration is not so easily reached, if the man's inherent cowardice holds him back even while his love urges him forward, how the woman's calm courage and self-command enable her to general the situation! How quietly she gives him the opportunity which he never could have found for himself! How easily and gently she guides the conversation into the channel, conducting by easy if sinuous reaches to the desired haven! With what tact she in-

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terprets his awkward, stammering phrases and puts into his mouth turns of speech which he dimly desired, yet never could have originated! And all the time, like the acting commander in a battle, she leaves the baton in the hands of the marshal, who sits in the shade and looks on.

“ The page killed the boar;
The knight had the gloire;”

and the man goes away from the scene of his betrothal with the step and mien of a conqueror, and thinks to himself what a dear, sweet, gentle, docile little wife he is to have, and what a clever fellow he is to have drawn that timid confession of love from her reluctant lips.

Life goes on, and the courage of womanhood develops in grander ways and more useful forms. Riches take wings, and the man, finding himself embarrassed, shrinks with masculine timidity from facing the fact himself or from confessing it to the world. Perhaps he even tries to hide it from the wife of his bosom, but she smiles at the attempt at evasion, plucks

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out the secret, and holding it up in calm, courageous hands, shows it for the poor thing it is, and tells so bravely how it is to be conquered and put aside that the man plucks up heart of grace to meet the foe before whom he had been ready to fall down in abject submission.

And if poverty—deep, dire poverty—comes, it is woman's courage that meets it and makes the best of it; it is she who dares to show herself to the world, to their own world, in the garb and equipage and occupation of poverty; it is she who says, virtually, if not in words,

“My mind to me a kingdom is,”

and reigns a queen within that kingdom undisturbed by the stupid comments of poor souls who cannot comprehend her or her royalty.

Perhaps the man breaks down utterly, for men are far more prone to break than bend, and then nine times out of ten the wife finds courage and ability to take up the laboring oar that he has dropped, and becomes the breadwinner

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of the family. And with what brave and strong resolution is that labor accomplished, even when the frail physique seems crumbling beneath the strain!

The mother of one of our governors sat up in bed when he was but a few days old and sewed upon boys' trousers for a clothing store, that she might pay the woman who nursed her for one week more. Another woman, crippled from the waist down, rolled herself around the house in a chair and did her own housework, because her husband could not afford to hire it done.

And how many more have done as much and never were heard of?

In other ways, too—is there a disagreeable truth to be told, or a caution given, or a warning conveyed in social or moral matters, who has the courage to do these things? Is it a woman or a man?

XVIII.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SYMPATHY AND PITY.

THE most precious thing in the world is sympathy.

That sentence looks well, does it not? And, furthermore, it is just one of those "glittering generalities" that we all accept just as we do silver certificates, with a polite pretense of crediting them at their face valuation and believing them to be "as good as gold."

I am afraid it is rather a fad of mine to war against these solemn hypocrites of popular sayings. To tell the truth, I never can see anything or anybody, which or who poses as being better and wiser than its surroundings, that I am not impelled to probe it to the center, to rub off its paint, to chip off its veneer, and expose the "true inwardness" of its being.

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I have no objection to Tartars in the abstract, but when they prance forth decked in all the ultra civilization of young Russia, I am impelled to abrade the surface just enough to let all the world recognize the Tartar underneath.

So, now, is Sympathy, with its pretentious great S, the most precious balm for a wounded heart?

Yes and no.

Far be it from me to deny that there are forms and measures of sympathy that are indeed healing and sweet, but how seldom are they found! It must be unobtrusive, to begin with. Like violets or lilies of the valley, it is to be known more by the subtle fragrance of its shy presence than, like the sunflower, by its breadth and insistency of form and color.

I have had friends, and I thank God for them, even though they stand in His presence and not in mine, whose very silence was the sweetest of sympathy; friends whose light touch never hurt the wound they healed; who never, by word or even look, suggested that there was

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a wound until I threw off the covering with which we all instinctively cloak our hurts from the common gaze.

A friend like this, a friend who is content to prove sympathy by silence until the sufferer invites speech, is far more likely to be admitted to the innermost chambers of the heart than the one who loudly knocks at the outer door, clamoring:

“Open, open! I have come to sympathize with you!”

For such a one there is in most outer doors one of those little well grated wickets one sees in old convent portals, where, in answer to the clamorous summons, a pale face appears for a moment, and a chill, repressed voice replies:

“Go in peace! The doors are locked, and none may pass them.”

There are so many classes of these mistaken sympathizers!

First, the loud and aggressive class—the women who swoop down upon you from the door of your own drawing room and fold you

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close in a smothering embrace of fur and cloth and beads and chains and ribbons (I give you my word I have come out of such an embrace gasping for breath, and with a bleeding scratch upon my cheek), exclaiming the while:

“Oh, my darling! My poor, dear child! You sweet dear, how I pity you! My heart fairly aches for you!”

Issuing from this embrace breathless, wounded, half stifled with the heavy perfume this kind of sympathizer generally uses, one longs to cry aloud with the first possible breath:

“At least, don’t pity me! I can bear suffocation and scratches and musk, but not pity!”

Of course one doesn’t say it, but we know what the parrot did instead of speaking.

To be pitied openly and avowedly and to hear it sweetly is probably the last test of a saint ripe for canonization, but I for one have no idea of how such a being may feel. It is not my *métier*, and I fully believe in at least one old and vulgar adage, “Cobbler, stick to your last!” So, not claiming saintship, present or

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prospective, I am free to confess that to be pitied in the style just specified arouses the most murderous qualities of my nature, and although the fetters of civilization may chain both my tongue and my hands the pityist would be very much alarmed if she could seemy heart.

I say "she" advisedly, for I do not think men are prone to make this sort of blunder. At any rate, they do not wrap one in a voluminous and odorous embrace, and any movement in that direction is so promptly checked that it is of small moment. The manner in which the male sympathizer most often offends is in imitating the bear in *Æsop's* fable, who, being very fond of the gardener, watched beside him while he slept. A mosquito buzzing about the sleeper's head threatened to disturb his slumber, whereupon the brute of a friend, watching his opportunity, brought down a weighty paw with deadly force upon—the mosquito certainly, but also upon the head of the beloved gardener, who never found words to thank his sympathizing friend, owing to the loss of his brains.

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This seems to me one of the anecdotes to which "*hæc fabula docet*" may be very profitably added. Did you never experience this kind of sympathy?

Well, it is much after this manner:

"You don't know how sorry I've been for you even since I heard of that fellow having run off with your money" (or whatever the special affliction may be, for I am literally supposing a case and never have experienced exactly this calamity). "How in the world came you to trust him so much? You see you are too credulous and too apt to believe every plausible lie that's told you. You ought to have asked some man to look into the thing and advise you. How did it happen? Come, tell me all about it, and I will show you where the weak point was, so you will know better another time, you poor little woman!"

That phrase, "Tell me all about it!" is one that the acceptable sympathizer never uses. It is as fatal to the desired end as it is to throw open a window and hurl a handful of grain at a

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bird which you wish to lure to a cage it has deserted. The true way is to softly open the window, strew the grain inside where it is quite obvious, but may be taken or left, as the victim may choose, and then yourself retire out of sight. It is pretty sure that by this stratagem you will finally have your bird just where you want him, and in process of time he will warble out all the secrets of his heart to you. But rushing at him and shouting, "Now, tell me all about it!" is the very last way to win his confidence.

Another kind of sympathizer and a very offensive one is the person who essays to "keep up your spirits" for you in some season of bereavement and affliction. I once saw a friend of mine (not myself) driven nearly mad by this sort of Job's comforter. She came to the house of mourning for a stay of some days, and apparently had laid in a stock of funny stories, society gossip and all sorts of conundrums, epigrams and frivolities generally. We never sat down at the table but this flood was loosed upon

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un, until one day my friend burst into tears and left the table, very greatly to the surprise of Mme. Malaprop, who inquired of everybody:

"Why, what is the matter? Did anybody say anything to remind her? And I was trying so hard to keep up her spirits and all!"

I had not the courage to reply, but some one else had, and said in so many words:

"I think it was just that. She couldn't stand having her spirits kept up any longer."

"Poor thing! It's too bad!" replied the sympathizer complacently. "But she'll be all right when she's had her cry out, and I'll tell her the rest of that story when she comes down. There's nothing so bad for a person as to dwell upon their troubles, and I made up my mind when I came to do everything I could to distract poor Mary, and I think I've done it."

"I think you have," replied the other dryly. "She seemed nearly distracted when she left the table."

A kindred spirit to this, but not so objectionable because she is not so funny, is the officious

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sympathizer, the person who insists upon distracting the mind of the sufferer by forcing all sorts of ordinary details upon it. If it is bereavement and the comforter is a woman, she insists upon discussing the mourning clothes and offering to run out and bring patterns, or send in some bonnets, or tell about the present mode of wearing a widow's veil. She discusses sleeves, and has an opinion upon the new skirts, and absolutely drags out assents or dissents from the pale lips of the sufferer, who plaintively but quite uselessly declares:

"Oh, I don't care in the least! Have everything that is proper and use your own judgment."

"Now, darling, that isn't right, you know," persists the comforter. "You really ought to rouse yourself and take an interest. You will care about all this in a little while, and it is so much better to have everything right to begin with."

"Not but that I could do it all myself perfectly well," explains the complacent comforter

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to some one else presently, "but it is so much better that she should be roused, poor dear!"

So she goes on tormenting her.

Perhaps it is another kind of sorrow. It might be a woman whose husband has eloped with another woman. In this case the officious sympathizer is full of good advice and offers of help in the way of sending telegrams, seeing detectives, interviewing reporters and the like, all very useful and perhaps essential modes of service, but with this species of sympathizer all made very obvious and obtruded continually with the avowed object of distracting the mind of the sufferer. One case of this kind that I remember was that of a dear child whom a fortune hunter had deliberately jilted when her father lost his money. The mother came to me full of indignation to complain of the "impertinent interference," as I grieve to say she called it, of a sympathizer, who visited her and her daughter with the avowed intention of "doing something about it" herself, and brought the copy of a letter she had already written and sent

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to the delinquent. She called, as she said, to comfort the poor girl with the knowledge that she had at least one sympathizing friend who was ready and anxious to do all that she could for her, even to going to see the young man and publicly upbraiding him in the midst of his family and friends.

“And what did you say?” inquired I, when my friend had poured forth this remarkable story, for I felt that I best showed my sympathy with her mortification by giving her a chance to narrate her successes. Nor was I mistaken, for she held her head very high, and her eyes were very bright as she replied :

“I said that if she really wished to oblige us she would do so best by remaining perfectly silent and quiet about affairs that certainly did not in the least concern her. Now she’ll go around and say all sorts of hateful things about us, but I’d rather she’d do that than try to sympathize.”

“Defend me from my friends, and I’ll take care of my enemies,” quoted I, and she who had

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come to me drowned in grief went away with smiling lips.

There is nothing in the world that so soon and so surely brings comfort to the human soul as to be placed upon good terms with itself.

One more class of mistaken sympathizers is that of lugubrious ones. They not only mingle their tears with yours, but the torrents of their grief sweep the fountains of yours quite dry and barren. They not only listen to your lamentations, but go beyond them with such jeremiads of woe that you leave off trying to keep up and end by feeling that you had not half appreciated your own misfortunes and listen to the new and enlarged version of them with a certain mournful pride and an access of self-pity which sweeps away all the healing work time may have begun to put in. "Such blows as this come but once in a lifetime. I can't wonder that you feel all hope of happiness is over, but you must remember that resignation is a duty."

You had not quite looked at the matter in this light before, and in the depths of your mind are

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guiltily conscious of a certain dismay at the idea of all happiness being over, but it would not be decent to say so, and you feel that sentence has gone forth against you, and your only course is to submit, so you murmur a mournful assent, and your comforter tearfully goes her way, leaving you a good deal worse off than she found you.

I spoke but now of the healing work of time, but I take it back. Time is not a healer. He is a destroyer. Time is the most heartless of sympathizers or comforters, for he brings no thought of comfort or self-justification. In fact, the harsh and bitter and cruel points of a great sorrow are those that time preserves and insists upon to the very last. Some kinds—nay, I will allow all kinds—of grief grow less poignant after awhile, but it is not because time has healed the wound, but because he has destroyed the sensibility, and the memory, and the environment of the sorrow. He is only kind because he is so ruthless. The best of all the sympathizers this world has ever produced

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was that Eastern sage who, being required by his king to produce a motto suited to every state of mind possible to humanity, enunciated, "This, too, will pass."

XX.

FOOLISH PROVERBS.

THERE are a great many things which have been said so often and so positively that they have at last taken a sort of brevet rank as facts, but which are nevertheless absurdly false and often very stupid. It is one of the funny fashions of this very funny world to enunciate these maxims with the air of having just originated some especially smart new maxim, the brilliant result of our own superior wisdom. I do not know anything more comically provoking than this air unless it is the earsplitting cackle of a hen over a new-laid egg. The egg is no better and no different from that which Eve's favorite pullet laid in paradise and that pullet's daughters have been laying over since. But to hear

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the cackle one would imagine that special hen had invented eggs and wished to call the attention of the world to the fact.

For instance, if a young man shows a tendency to go away from home and see something of the world, become "a globe trotter" to a greater or less extent, he is warned that "a rolling stone gathers no moss"—that is to say, the moving man will not acquire money and position. Now, we all know that this is a prodigious falsehood. It is the moving man, the pusher, the hustler, the rustler, or whatever else he may be called, who succeeds and makes for himself position, money and influence. The human boulder gathers moss indeed, but it is the moss of decay and the rust of inaction.

But opposed to this is another proverb equally false, "Homely youth have ever homely wits," a statement perhaps true in Shakespeare's time, but not at all true now, for it is in quiet and seclusion, at home, or college, or in some sort of retirement, that "wits," if wits mean intellect and mental processes, go on the best, and

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the scientist, the chemist, the philosopher, the lecturer or the preacher, would come to great grief if he had not some sort of "home" to shut himself into.

But the popular saying which just now annoys me the most is one that your friends always present to you in times of trouble and perplexity, generally offering it with a sort of benevolent and perfunctory air, as if it were a piece of religious consolation or a well-proved recipe for happiness, a sort of panacea for every ill of spirit mind or body. It is sometimes expressed in one form, sometimes another; but the idea is, "All things come round to him who will but wait."

Now I appeal to you, my dear reader, to say if that promise has fulfilled itself in your life. It certainly has not in mine. We, all of us, I suppose, start in life with some far-off ideal of happiness or at least pleasure glittering like a star in our future, either remote or close at hand. It is like the golden cup which we were told in our childhood is to be found hanging on the end

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of the rainbow. Probably most of us have once or twice set off full of hope to find that cup, but I have yet to hear of any one who has achieved it. And do we generally gain these early ideals? Have you? Think a bit of what you wanted most at fifteen, at twenty, at twenty-five, and so on. Have you ever really and fully obtained it? Probably you have changed that ideal many times, you have set the goal where you were to rest satisfied farther and farther away, but have you ever reached it? In one word, have you found in your own experience that "all things come round to him who will wait?"

Doubtless we have often derived comfort from the phrase, for most people are very ready to take words for things. Some older person has said it to us with that assured and benevolent manner of which I spoke but now—some parent or friend or clergyman to whom we have applied for counsel and comfort—and we have received it as a sort of prophetic promise, and gone away with the feeling that all is now go-

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ing to be set right, and we have only to wait a bit to have our heart's desire fulfilled in the completest manner.

And does it?

It is about as rational a belief as that we attach to the words of a fortune teller to whom we have furtively applied in some terrible mud-dle of our affairs. She has "prophesied smooth things" in a very impressive manner, and even while jeering at our own credulity we go away with a sort of shamefaced faith that perhaps, after all, she is right, and at any rate we feel a little encouraged.

And how common sense insists upon reminding us of the failure of various other similar ventures!

The young girl fixes her affections or perhaps only her fancy upon some man, who in turn has fixed his upon some other woman, or, as is more likely, upon himself and his own interests. "All things come round to him who will but wait," whispers the poor child to herself, and she modestly and silently waits until the man

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either marries the other girl or drifts out of her horizon altogether.

Perhaps the "waiting" lover is the man—one of those men who pride themselves upon their tenacity of purpose and power of controlling fate. He pays court to the woman of his choice, and she, having like a bee just lighted upon the proffered blossom and sipped the quality of its honey, declines to take any more of it, be she wooed never so importunately. So he, too, fixes his faith upon Time and waits for that official to bring round his heart's desire. And does he?

Well, I am bound to confess that here and there is a case where the woman, tired out with her lover's persistency, marries him to get rid of him—but does she do it? And does he find that Time has brought him the spirit of what he desired, or only tantalized him with the empty letter? More often, however, the girl only encourages him enough to keep him along and uses him as a butt and foil for her other flirtations, a *bête de souffrance* to be finally

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dropped with a scornful laugh or a pettish disclaimer when the man she loves finally makes his definite offer.

But outside of sentiment or love-making there are plenty of people who, trusting to this delusive promise, prove for themselves its falsity—the young man, for instance, who intends to be rich. He is told of the millionaires who have begun life with two or three pence in their pockets, and the traditional “bundle under their arms,” and somebody with that exasperating air of giving an invaluable formula of success adds, “All things come round to him who will but wait.”

So he goes to work at five dollars per month, and after awhile is raised to ten dollars and twenty dollars, and so on, and keeps “waiting,” with the most generous reliance upon that charming promise—waiting through boyhood and youth and young manhood, until some fine day he suddenly perceives that he is a gray haired, middle-aged man, with a few most painfully saved thousands in the bank, and a salary

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which just enables him to live comfortably and to put by a little every year. And those are all the things that have come round to reward *his* waiting.

Perhaps he has no ambition to be a Vanderbilt; perhaps he only desires to have a house of his own, a horse and trap, a comfortable home for the girl he means to marry; perhaps he is a good young fellow, and wants to take care of his widowed mother and little sisters as well as the wife. He goes bravely about his task, knowing that he cannot nearly reach the mark just yet, but then, you know, "All things come round," etc.

He finds hundreds—yes, thousands—of other Richards in the field; he finds the labor market glutted; he finds trained skill demanded where he has only willing service to render. He is not one of the exceptional few who hit upon the royal road to success through some invention or some system as yet unheard of. He is only capable of routine work performed in a plodding sort of fashion, and although he is never

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out of employment, he never makes any great success or receives any great emolument until, at last, when the mother is dead, and the sisters married, or earning their own living as school-teachers or typists, and the wife worn and fretted with hope too long deferred, he sees that he might have a horse and trap, perhaps, but after all, he doesn't care for driving, and the boys will need the money, or the girls must have it, and so it goes.

Yet another class of patient waiters upon this *ignis fatuus* of a promise are the brethren of my own craft—the writers.

A man, or, for that matter, it is in these days more often a woman, who feels within herself the *cacæthes scribendi*, immediately stakes out her homestead on Parnassus and selects her niche in the temple of fame. Shakespeare, Milton, Bulwer, George Eliot, Dickens and the rest are her brothers and sisters. They had to make a beginning, and so will she. They have made glorious endings, and so will she. Their names are known all over the

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world, and hers is not known at all, but then "all things come round to him who will but wait," and she doesn't mind waiting for a year or perhaps, two.

So the poor thing begins, and if my tone is playfully scoffing, my heart is full of the tenderest sympathy and pity, for I have seen and known it all so often, tried to warn some of these gallant adventurers of the perils of their voyage, and to point out the fact that amid such crowded fleets as daily put to sea upon the inky ocean comparatively few of the brave little crafts reach the harbor of success, while the rest are stranded on Charybdis, or swallowed up in Scylla, or swamped by collision with their rivals, or lost and wrecked from any one of a hundred causes impossible to foresee.

"But I am brave and patient," the aspirant will answer, with a smile. "I can wait for months, or even a year or two. and 'all things come round to him who will but wait.' "

So the victim starts out, writes her poem or her essay or her serial story, for these hopeful

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people never think of doing less than the heroic, and never descend to the level of the short, pithy story, which is the only salable kind of manuscript, and she or he sends it first to the leading magazines, with perhaps, a line suggesting that the author knows that Longfellow received five hundred dollars for a similar work, but she is content to begin with one hundred dollars. The editor smiles compassionately, and sends back the MS. Then it sifts down through the lower channels of literature, until it finally reaches home for the last time, and sleeps in the grave of "rejected addresses."

Now, not wishing to be misanthropic or discouraging to any brave endeavor, I appeal to all literary experts to decide out of their own experience and observation the truth to such a one as this author of the proverb which has buoyed him or her up. *Does* anything of consequence "come round" after long waiting? Is it not rather the rule that the author who fails to gain some measure of success and recognition in the first two or three years of mature effort, never

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will succeed? If relying upon his false maxim he persists in offering his wares here, there and everywhere, and accepting the lowest prices and poorest places, he will doubtless earn some money and have the pleasure of seeing himself in print, but alas for the dreams that promised to become golden realities!

But Nemesis, or Fate, or whatever we call the "destiny that shapes men's ends," is fond of her little joke, and is constantly amusing herself by fulfilling the letter of her agreement while breaking the spirit of it all to pieces.

Often enough she *does* bring round "all things to him who will but wait," but at such a time and in such fashion as to make success even more bitter than defeat. The lover wins his lass, or the lass her lover, only to find that the apple of Sodom, fair and rosy without, was all bitterness and dryness within, mere dust and ashes which, perforce, the winner must swallow and put as good a face as possible upon the unsavory morsel.

The young man wins his fortune when he is

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too old, too decrepit, too world-worn to enjoy it. I knew one such man whom nature had intended for an artist, and whose early dream was to earn money enough to go to Italy and study. At fifty odd he told me of this youthful vision, and added, "I have plenty of money now, and last year I went to Italy only to find that pictures bored me, and looking at galleries tried me more than Wall Street or the Corn Exchange."

The literary hack, after years of thankless labor, hits upon a vein which some critic recognizes as true metal, and kindly prophecies will bring success at last, but the hand is palsied, the pen is worn out, the brain after that one last flicker sinks into slumber. "Twenty years ago," the poor pale lips whisper, "I could have made a name and a fortune out of this, but now—too late!"

Saddest of all, perhaps, is the love that comes too late—the pang with which a weary heart recognizes that it has spent itself for naught, has given its pure gold for the basest dross, and

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that now, when it is bankrupt and discouraged and hopeless, here is the object to which it should have turned; here is the diamond of purest water which it should have purchased with all its wealth; here is the one opportunity life has held for the happiness of that poor sorrowful heart, and it has come too late, too late!

And such are the ironies of fate, and such is the true and most frequent translation of that glittering generality, "All things come round to him who will but wait!"

XXI.

HOW TO WRITE A LETTER.

I SUPPOSE everybody who is in the way of receiving many letters has often noticed how many of them are, in one way or another, very unsatisfactory letters, and wondered why they need be so.

Of course, this comment must most often arise in the minds of literary persons, especially of those whose business it is to consider and decide upon the products of other people's pens; and as my experience lies in these latter lines I am only too often led to wonder why persons who can write well for the press, or, as one may say, for the public, write so very poorly for their friends or for an individual reader.

Perhaps the greatest wonder of all, in my mind, is that I don't write better letters myself, for I assure you, dear friends, that I understand

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my own shortcomings quite as well as you do; but remember, if you please, that there is a large class who "know the right and yet the wrong pursue," and so far as letter-writing goes, rank me among them.

After this bit of salutary meekness, let me proceed to rehabilitate myself by pointing out some of the most common faults in the letters I peruse, some of which faults I confess as my own, and some others of which I indignantly deny, and please don't anybody intimate that I

"Compound for sins I am inclin'd to,
By d—ing those I have no mind to!"

In the first place let us consider letters of friendship, especially those occurring in a correspondence. How many persons begin these with apologies for long silence, "I don't know what you have been thinking or saying about me all this while," or, more artlessly, "I suppose you are provoked at me for not writing," or some other form of deprecation of wrath, and then follows a string of apologies and minute explanation of the reasons why the letter has

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not been written sooner, and promises of doing better in the future.

Now all this is very conceited and vain, since it takes for granted that one's letters are of great value, and have been watched and waited for, whereas, in point of fact, your correspondent has very likely been just as busy and just as preoccupied as you have been, and has not had time to notice that your letter did not come, or even has been glad that it did not, because it has not demanded an answer. One of the sad lessons of life is that we are not of as much consequence to anybody else as we are to ourselves, and that very many of our friends do not much care whether they receive a letter from us to-day or this day week. My own dearest and oldest woman friend and I correspond very seldom, and never accuse each other or excuse ourselves concerning the gaps between our letters, and yet we love each other more and more deeply as the silent years go on.

The next most common fault in friendly letters is filling them with discussion of the person

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to whom they are written, advice and suggestions about that person's movements or affairs, and questions as to his or her health, opinions and domestic circle. Of course, between intimate and familiar friends all this has its place, and there are plenty of occasions when the very object of writing is to advise or question, or in some fashion express one's mind about the person to whom one writes, but in the ordinary friendly letter this is not advisable. When one takes up a letter in a familiar handwriting one says to one's self: "Ah! here's a letter from A. Now I shall hear all the Washington gossip;" or, "Now I shall get a little rest from all this worry and bother of business."

But lo and behold, the friendly letter is simply a raking over of all the things which fret and weary you the most. How are you getting along with your lawsuit, or is there any chance that those bonds or stocks will recoup themselves? And how is your neuralgia, and did you ever hear of this or that remedy—generally remedies that you have thrown aside long ago;

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or how you must miss your dear little dog, and can't you trace the thief? Or perhaps the letter is filled with advice upon some matter whose "true inwardness" nobody understands but yourself, or some course upon which you have deliberately made up your mind and fixed your resolution, although you have not announced it to the world, or even to your correspondent.

No! In a friendly letter don't try to avoid egotism, but rather cultivate it. Your friend knows all about herself and her own affairs and surroundings; what she wants now is to know something about yours; some brief, bright little account of something you have done, some person you have met, some amusement whereat you have assisted, and where you have met acquaintances mutual to you and your correspondent.

Perhaps you live so quiet a life that you have no social anecdotes to relate; perhaps it is so uneventful that you have done nothing and seen nothing worth repeating. Well, then, fall back upon the things *not* worth repeating so long as

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they are vividly in your mind. One of the very most amusing letters I ever read in my life was from a young girl living a very, very quiet life, and making no pretension to literary ability. It was all about the adventures of a piece of sticky fly paper on a windy day, ending with her father setting his silk hat down upon it, and then, while nobody could speak for laughter, snatching up the hat, clapping it upon his head and rushing out of the house in masculine contempt of the senseless hilarity of his family.

A very trifling occurrence, you will say, and a very silly letter, but all the same it gave me a good laugh and a merry mood, and I have had a pleasant thought for that girl through all the years that have rolled between that day and this.

If you have nothing whatever to tell about yourself, find some little bit of news about other people; not the affairs of nations, which are generally stupid, or of public characters, which every one may read in the newspapers, but of

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the people around you. As, for instance, "We have a new Biddy, and when I told her in making coffee to put in an egg 'and the shells,' she actually used an *unbroken egg*, and at least half a pound of cocoa *shells*." Or tell of Miss Brown's appearance at the polls, or Miss Smith's astounding new gown, or in fact any little incident that could make one smile, or give one a new view of humanity.

Perhaps somebody remarks, in a town full of "Prunes, Prisms and Propriety," "That thing is gossip, and I never gossip!"

To such an one I say, then you'd better learn, my dear, for I contend that gossip—that is to say, good-natured, truthful, charitable gossip—is a very useful element of social success either in conversation or letter-writing. It takes one's thoughts off of oneself, and off of that perpetual question as to life being worth the living, and off of those darker problems concerning the sin and misery and needs of those around us in a great city, which, like the Sphinx, are always threatening to devour us if we do not guess their riddle.

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Yes, it is a great thing to some of us brain workers to have a bit of amusing gossip presented as an attraction to our overburdened lives, and I for one am always thankful to a correspondent who presents it to me.

Another very frequent fault in friendly letters is the want of proportion between value and space; that is to say, three-fourths of the sheet will be covered with either those excuses for not having written sooner, or some lamentation over a mistake already corrected, as, for instance, "I was so sorry, I thought you said three instead of two, but as I told you when we did finally meet I was thinking of the last time you called for me, and you remember that was three," etc., a couple of pages utterly useless and uninteresting, since the friends had already come to an explanation by word of mouth. And then on the fourth page comes, "Oh, I must tell you I have at last made an arrangement to sell my house and go abroad, but I have no time to tell you about it now, as the bell has rung for dinner."

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How many such letters we all receive; yes, and unhappily so many of us write! Letters filled with what might just as well be left out, and omitting or minimizing the most important subject at our command. It is always better before one puts pen to paper to cast a little comprehensive glance over what one has to say, and select the one thing that must be said to begin upon; give the best time and attention to that in the very first place, and then if there is still room and the dinner bell doesn't ring, fill up your letter with as many "frills" as you like.

Another very provoking kind of friendly (?) letter is one I too often receive. It is a very brief and scrawly kind of note, written merely to say that the writer has no time for a letter, although she has a thousand things to say, and loves me very dearly. To such an one I have sometimes replied, "If you have no time for a letter, wait for a few hours until you have, and if you love me show your affection by making a little time."

Yet another irritating sort of letter is a half-

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confidential one: "I had such a strange interview with—you know who! If I should tell you about it you would—well, I don't know how you'd feel nor what you'd say, but I ought not to tell you nor anybody else, so I won't. It wouldn't be right to let you see how far—well, there, we won't say any more about it. Have you heard Patti this season?"

Now if one's intimate friend undertakes to talk in that fashion face to face, one can soon shake the whole story out of her, or if she is too exasperating can say, "Pray don't tell me if unless you want to; I really don't take any interest in the subject." But when the friend is miles, or even oceans away, it is not worth while to slap at her in this fashion, and, of course, one wouldn't choose to urge for a confidence, even if quite sure it would come in the end.

So much for friendly letters. As for business letters, their merit, like that of wit, lies mostly in their brevity. A person who has a business proposition to present, or a business question or a business reply to make, should

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have a mathematical capacity for extracting the "square root" of the matter, and giving that to his correspondent, pure and simple. I always distrust a business correspondent who indulges in fine language or graceful verbiage; the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth should be the criterion of business letters as well as of legal testimony. You have something definite to say—a proposal, a petition, a question, a reply, or whatever it may be—well, turn it over in your own mind for a few moments, get at the pith of it, the "true inwardness," and then clothe it in simple, straightforward language, and sign your name to it. Of course, there are some little forms of courtesy to be observed, but don't garnish your plain roast beef with paper frills or carrot flowers; it will go down better without them.

There is one kind of business, or semi-business letter which every editor receives only too often, and is more or less grieved threat, although it seldom effects its object. It is written by some poor soul who has been left a

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widow with little children, or has a sick mother to support, or is struggling to get the means for a collegiate education, or from some other highly respectable cause is in need of money, and has persuaded him or herself that it may be wrung from the hand of a sympathetic editor in exchange for a manuscript, accompanying the letter. Of course, if the manuscript proves available, the hope is fulfilled, and all goes upon velvet; but, unfortunately, it generally isn't available, for few persons who have the gift of authorship find it out for the first time when misfortune comes upon them. One must have learned to use one's weapon before the hour of combat arrives.

Now, editors are but men and women, and are often moved by these appeals to a very considerable extent, but if they are honest editors and good business men and women, the sympathy leads to no results. The editor is the servant of the public, and is bound to furnish his employer with the best wares that are in the market, so far as he can obtain them. The edi-

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tor who prints a trashy story or poem because the writer is unfortunate and needs money, fails to carry out his contract with the public, and the public will very soon show its resentment by withdrawing its patronage. No, the plaintive appeal only frets and annoys the editor, and very, very seldom produces any other result.

Once, to be sure, I was so betrayed by my weaker nature as to pay for a MS. story immediately thrown into the waste basket, but I was thoroughly punished for my folly by an inundation of worthless matter from the same writer, who was grievously offended and rather abusive because none of it was accepted.

There is one more class of letters, namely, love letters, of which I might speak, but—"the dinner bell rings, so good-by!"

XXII.

ON BEING EXACTING.

WHAT is the secret of all the marital unhappiness we see nowadays?" a young friend asked me recently in a most discouraged voice. I looked at her in astonishment, for both the tone and manner indicated that she was experiencing some of the first pangs of discovering that her idol was only made of common clay, after all.

I also remembered, as I noted the pretty, worried face, the day, but a year ago, when she had called on me with eyes radiant with joy to tell of her approaching marriage, of her intense love and admiration for the man who was to become her husband, and of all the bright hopes which encircled her future.

"Why, what makes you ask such questions?" I inquired, trying to laugh this dear little friend out of her despondent mood.

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“Oh, well, everything seems to be clouded,” she responded sorrowfully. “I used to think it must be lovely to be married to the man I adored, but George and I don’t seem half as happy as I thought we should be; and, in fact, I have been noticing carefully all of the girls who are in our married set, and I don’t know of one genuinely happy couple.”

This seemed at first a terrible commentary on either one of the sexes or both, and yet when I commenced to mentally review the lists of unhappy marriages I had heard of during the past year, there was no gainsaying the fact that somebody or something was all wrong.

Taking it for granted, then, as a tangible, recognizable fact that genuinely happy unions are rare and illusive things, to what direct cause shall we assign such a state of affairs? Why is it that a young, beautiful, loving girl should, after a few years of wedded life, either develop into a worldly, married flirt, or a careworn, sad-looking woman, and that a bright, handsome fellow oftentimes becomes miserly and dis-

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agreeable, and also that when one chances upon what appears to be a thoroughly contented couple the fact is commented on as marvelous?

I have spent much thought in endeavoring to solve the problem, and even called in the assistance of friends to the extent of asking their opinions on the subject.

One man who I thought would be just in his views said:

“My dear madam, girls and women expect too much nowadays. They want too many bonnets, too many dresses. In short, they insist upon living with a poor husband as they have lived with a rich father, and most men nearly kill themselves in trying to meet these demands.”

This may be in part true, but it is not wholly the girl's fault. Who can blame her for wanting pretty things? She can usually get them if she works for herself, and she naturally expects a loving husband to exert himself to procure what a fond father was willing to work hard to obtain for her.

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When it comes to being extravagant, then the fault lies with the parents, particularly the mother, who ought always to bring daughters up with the constant admonition that they must never forget that riches have wings, and that a true, loving heart is worth much more than jewels. Indeed it is often mothers who put mercenary thoughts into their daughters' brains. I heard one not long ago say to a caller on her pretty daughter: "It would not be well for a poor man to ask for my child Addie," and in that remark lay the whole matter in a nutshell, plainly indicating the kind of tuition this future wife had received.

According to several women's opinions on the question, it is men who expect too much from their wives. "They give so little, and want so much," as one little rebel expresses it. Yes, they do demand a great deal, it is true; but did it ever occur to you in what different environments they are brought up, and that when they select you for the head of their house, and give you what they usually think the most of—their

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name—they are paying you what they consider the greatest compliment possible? No, it is quite evident that we must use the lash a little on both sides. There are faults in the man and woman which need correction. Much thought and study and careful weeding out of selfishness is required to render them congenial companions to each other.

Now, I consider daintiness of habit and dress a great factor toward marital happiness. A man who is fond of seeing everything neat and in order is often irritated and made absolutely cross by his wife's lack of tidiness, her absolute disregard of what she terms his finicky ways, and a gross negligence in the care of his clothing as well as of her own person and dress. I have often wondered in my own mind if women were really aware what a powerful influence lies in daintiness of attire and surroundings. If they did, would they persist in wearing old black gowns or soiled dressing sacks and wrappers in the house? Would they save the lovely clothes, pretty frills and *chic* boots for

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outsiders to admire and throw on some shabby gown or faded finery and down-at-the-heel slippers the moment they enter the home, and there is "no one but husband to see them?"

Do women realize what a subtle fascination for most men exists in her toilet table, with its dainty brushes and pincushions and perfume bottles, all of which possess more or less of an air of mystery which is wonderfully attractive? The toilet articles need not of necessity be extremely expensive. It is principally the absolute cleanliness and purity of the silk and muslin draperies and silver-tipped glass bottles which prove so irresistible. I have often seen men walk around a fair woman's pretty table and admiringly examine the quaint conceits her own personality had devised, and lovingly touch the dozen small objects which he knew were for her personal use.

The very man for whom they put on their most delicate laces and "fetching" hats to attract before marriage, they oftentimes give themselves little trouble to hold afterward. While

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the husband may preserve silence, he notices all this, considers it in the light of a direct slight, and it frequently serves to form the first layer of a strata of future unhappiness. You may always be absolutely certain that other women are on the lookout for him, and are always daintily and becomingly dressed when he is expected, and that the wife suffers by contrast.

Now, while the husband is not so apt to allow himself to become slovenly in appearance, his habits may be exasperatingly untidy. Is there anything more trying to a woman's nerves and temper, I wonder, than to go into her pretty bedroom or parlor and find a clothes-brush in one corner, clothes tossed in another direction, while pipes, stumps of cigars, and above all, dozens of burnt matches, decorate bureau and mantel?

"Well," he says in answer to her remonstrances, "where shall I put them, and isn't it part of women's duties to tidy up?" Yes, it may belong to woman's province to set her house in order, but wouldn't the task be made much

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easier if the men of the household threw their cigars and matches in the receiver made for them and hung back the brush on the nail from which they took it?

I cannot but feel convinced that much of the misery which we know exists among many of our married friends is due to the dissipated past of the husbands. From boyhood up men invariably dissipate in a greater or less degree, according to their temperaments and dispositions. When they marry young, their habits are of necessity changed, and, if they possess the requisite qualities to be steadfast and true, prove good husbands and fathers, harmed but little by their former worldliness; but in the generality of cases men in comfortable circumstances do not marry early in life. They are having too good a time to settle down. They want to continue to enjoy the forbidden sweets and fascinations of "life," as they call it, before becoming Benedicts. It is only when wearied with the glamor of the show lights and blaze within the glare of dancing halls that

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most men long for home and a wife. But the woman must be young, perfect and spotless. Yes, indeed, notwithstanding the knowledge of his own shortcomings, he demands beauty, purity and, as a usual thing, a woman's first affection, if he can secure it. He may be a wreck, body and soul, yet he accepts the sacrifice of a woman's health, strength and good looks—for that is what it amounts to in the end. She meets him at some reception, say. He looks the personification of manly beauty. When she bids him adieu, she fondly imagines he also retires at that time to dream of her. She does not see him again until the next afternoon, and then he is well-groomed and attentive. How can she know that in the meantime he had spent most of the night in revelry? She is a lady, and cannot visit his club or apartments, and assuredly no friend of his will turn informer, so she has no possibility of a knowledge of his habits, unless she fortunately possesses a father or brother, and even these are often worldly enough to condone courses which they

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probably have followed or are following themselves.

"The cause of this state of affairs?" some old-fashioned person asks.

The low moral standard which pervades what we call society, I answer unhesitatingly, together with the false custom of having one law of morals for men and another one—decidedly another one—for women.

No man living likes to be judged, or, in fact, will allow himself to be judged, by the same moral standard that governs women. There is one rule for him, an entirely different path for her, and all the arguments in the world cannot change his ideas. It was but recently, in discussing this subject with a gentleman born, that he boasted of his own charity, and that of his sex in general toward women, whereas women, he declared, made no allowance for men's natural weaknesses.

"Surely you must admit," said I, "that women may feel justly indignant at being deceived in a man's character. It is but natural

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that she should expect some youthfulness of feeling for the honest affections she offers upon the altar of marriage; but I thoroughly believe there is not a true woman living but what, if the man she loved came to her frankly and said, 'I am not worthy of your devotion; I have passed through the whole gamut of evil, but bear with me and be my friend,' would extend her arms to him and say, 'I will help you back to health, strength and purity.' Do you know any man of your acquaintance who would be as charitable toward a woman? No; not one of them would forgive the deceit practiced upon what they are pleased to term their pride, manhood and superiority."

If the day ever comes when there shall be a clear and perfect understanding between men and women, when they shall judge each other not only by their own weaknesses, but by what they give of the present, irrespective of the past, then we may see true relations between husband and wife. "Sympathy is force," should be each one's motto. It should be hung

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over the fireside and in every room of the home.

An excellent thing to remember is that if you give any amount of force from yourself to another you are losing just so much vitality, unless you receive the same amount of force in return.

In other words, if a woman sympathizes in her husband's work, enters into his hopes and fears, and helps him along in life, as she should do, and if he accepts that sympathy and unselfishness from her, he must give back, by his interest in the details of her private life, the vital force he is absorbing, if he desires to keep her with him and hold the sunshine of her love.

Have I solved any of the problems of happy relations between husband and wife?

XXIII.

TWO ENDS OF A STICK.

EVERY stick has two ends. So has every fact and every truth. So has every trait and every action, and it is one of the most amusing of any diversions to find out what the other end looks like—better than conundrums or prize puzzles any time, equal to a first-rate detective story, even one of Sherlock Holmes' miraculous performances as portrayed by Conan Doyle, for you can find it right inside of yourself, and probably everybody has found out by the time they can keenly enjoy a detective story—a first-class one, I mean—that nothing in the world is so interesting to a man as his own self. I know a very handsome man who has an album filled with pictures of himself at different ages, and in different costumes, and who declares with a somewhat brutal frank-

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ness that it is to him by far the most interesting collection of pictures the world could produce.

Another man, far from handsome, but very bright, cynically proclaims that he lives to the glory and for the advancement of Mephistopheles or Iago, or by whatever name you choose to supply his real cognomen.

Well, then, granted that the most captivating study of mankind is himself, I will suggest to my friends pining for amusement the little game of hunting up "the other end" of their own pet virtues, and if they have any faults or can get some friend to point out one or two, they may solace themselves by discovering that every fault has its alternative virtue.

For instance, our friend M. I., who lives for his own glory and advantage, is only the other end of the man who lives to spread abroad some great discovery and advantage to the world, which becomes incidentally glory and advantage to him himself. Jenner, Fulton, Ericsson, Christopher Columbus and several other world-wide benefactors were men who, if their natures

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had taken another turn, would have spent life in admiring their own talents and despising other people who couldn't see so much.

The "lovely woman who stoops to folly" for love's sake is one who is holding the scepter of womanhood by the wrong end, and misusing the noble virtue of love and self-sacrifice. The lawyer who sells his gifts of eloquence and defends the criminal who pays him, is only holding by the wrong end that weapon which is mightier than sword or pen—the tongue of the ready speaker. Now bring it right home and see what fun it is.

When you ran and helped grandmamma up the steps and seated her so prettily in the best chair and brought her some tea and waited upon her, as she said, "like an angel," it was very filial and sweet and affectionate and dear, wasn't it? At any rate, you felt yourself very good while you did it, and were not surprised at her praise and petting; but didn't you know in the depths of your deceitful little heart that Robert Brownlow was looking on, and that he

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declares sweetness, docility, and domesticity a woman's chiefest of charms?

Now comes the little game. That action had two ends—one of them all abloom with the fair lilies of womanly virtue, and the other carved into the similitude of a grinning imp of falsehood and pretense. Which end really was uppermost? See?

But for your comfort let me suggest that I myself often cannot be sure which end was uppermost, for like most other people I generally carry the pole so evenly balanced that just a little tilt will incline it one way or the other.

Another queer thing about this balancing is that very often we see one end of the staff while the world cries out at the other. Did you never find yourself blushing and ashamed at praise and laudation and popularity bestowed most lavishly upon some action which the world considers very self-denying and generous, when your own conscience told you the motive was to gain this very laudation, or perhaps money or position or some other price?

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And were you never astonished and grieved at finding yourself accused of just these same base motives when really you had for once lost sight of tiresome self, and been working purely and simply for other people?

Well, it was in both cases because the world had got hold of the wrong end of the stick, while you knew more accurately which end you really held.

Perhaps the virtue most often used by its wrong handle and so converted into a vice is the quality of sincerity. Most of us declare with a warm glow of conscious virtue about the heart that whatever faults we may possess that of falsehood is far from us. It is very odd, but I have never known an exception to this rule. Everybody claims to be truthful, and in point of fact hardly anybody is absolutely truthful.

Why is this?

Probably because truth is a thing so lovely in itself that we all wish to think it one of our own characteristics, and so perjure ourselves by claiming it.

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But truth, like love, reaches at its one extremity to the very zenith and at the other sinks to the darkest depths. Love is the chief attribute of the Deity, and debased possession is the delight of devils. So truth divine and godlike in its highest examples is made a very instrument of demons in its distorted form.

But yet those who use it in this form invariably boast, "I am so sincere I feel that I really must speak the truth at all risks."

You know and I know that sort of truth-teller, the malicious gleam of the eye, the fiendish glee of the smile, the false ring of the voice, the stereotyped phrases and the inevitable result. Perhaps it is only a petty little sting after all, such as:

"Yes, dear, I thought you ought to know, and of course it is my duty to tell the truth, but she did say that your conduct on that occasion was very remarkable—yes, very remarkable indeed—and everybody was commenting on it."

Or perhaps:

"They were admiring that gown of yours,

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and I felt obliged to tell them that it was made over from two others, and not a Worth at all. I had to tell the truth, you know."

Or:

"Too bad your sister has married into an insane family. Oh, didn't you know it? Yes, indeed. His aunt on the father's side is in an asylum at this minute. I don't believe in suppressing the truth. Do you?"

And perhaps it is something far more deadly than these—a stab instead of a pin-prick—as:

"Yes, a very pleasant man, as you say; but did you never hear that he is a convicted criminal?"

Then when you demand the full details of this unpleasant "truth" you find that long years ago, when this middle-aged man was a lad, he had been tempted and in a moment of weakness appropriated moneys not his own; had been convicted of the offense and suffered the penalty. Shame, penitence and a life of undeviating probity have followed, and the sometime culprit has lived down his error and

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become a worthy citizen, but the truth-teller will not let him escape, and perhaps succeeds in ruining his social prospects and the peace of all who have learned to love him by this diabolical form of frankness.

"A nice woman—pity she drinks," is perfectly true, and when the explanation comes: "Yes, she drinks tea. Don't you?" the false impression is not quite removed, and at the best one feels that such jests are like playing with fire.

Just a step or two further in this form of diabolical sincerity is the mysterious assertion, "Yes, very pretty and very lively, as you say—almost too lively, if all accounts are true."

"What do you mean by too lively?" is indignantly demanded, and the truth-teller bridles and virtuously replies:

"Oh, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, I'm sure, but everybody knows that she was a very gay sort of girl, and her mother found it hard enough to keep her within bounds."

And a careless listener carries away the im-

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pression that the lively and irrepressible girl has become a woman of questionable character.

The lecturer wearily says to his truthful friend: "I'm afraid that subject did not exactly suit the audience to-night. How was it? Did they act bored?" And the friend replies: "Well, yes, I thought they were. I noticed a good deal of yawning and fidgeting, and several went away before it was over."

So the lecturer, mortified and discouraged, feels himself a failure, and the next time goes upon the platform with the shadow of defeat already wrapping him like a mantle, and feeling that he can't succeed, does not succeed, and perhaps gives the whole thing up and takes to—well, to be a book peddler and a misanthrope.

"Do I look well to-night, dear?" asks the somewhat faded beauty of her jealous cousin, who never was a beauty, and the latter replies:

"Well, yes, dear, just a little tired and dragged perhaps. And let me wipe that powder off your chin! There, now, you look quite nice, I'm sure."

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So poor Beauty goes into the assembly feeling worn and tired, and nervously conscious of every little accessory she has fondly hoped unseen, and her looks are injured, and her pleasure is spoiled.

“What a pity your John did not remember his part better!” says one mother to another, as they come from the school exhibition, and John’s mother replies, with red cheeks:

“I’m afraid he was too much taken up with watching your Mary. You must have sat up nights for a month getting that costume ready; but it’s such a pity it was so tight in the sleeves. The child’s hands were red as beets.”

Both ladies have told the truth, and both would loudly proclaim sincerity to be the underlying impulse of their speeches; but they part with a bitterness of heart each against the other that does not disappear for months—perhaps for years.

It is quite true that John is slow and stupid, and that Mary is coquettish and overdressed; also that the boy forgot his part, and the girl’s

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hands were red as she spread them over the piano keys, but if those two mothers had not told the truth to each other how much better friends they would have been and how much happier!

I don't mean they should have told lies. No, indeed! I, too, am a great stickler for truth, and I, too, have a Washingtonian objection to telling a lie, but there is all the difference in the world between telling a lie and not telling the truth, or, if you will allow me to return to my first metaphor, it makes all the difference in the world which end of the staff we present.

Your friend asks you how she is looking. You may fix your eyes upon the defects or upon the good points of her appearance, and answer accordingly. Instead of the reply quoted above, the cousin of the society woman might have said: "A little languid perhaps, but that will go off as soon as your friends gather about you. How charming your hair is to-night!"

The orator's *fidus Achates* could have said perfectly truthfully: "Oh, in a mixed audience

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there are always some who can't appreciate anything but 'bones and the end men.' Your lecture isn't meant for that class of persons, and you needn't care whether they are pleased or not, or, if you do care, it would be easy enough to leave out so and so and put in a few of those capital stories you tell so well."

Perhaps we are apt to lose sight of the three divisions of truth, as set forth in the legal exhortation to tell "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." After all, however, the only part of this that applies to secular life is the last clause of the three. If you tell "nothing but the truth," you must use your own judgment as to "the whole truth." In no relation of life is this poor truth of ours so mangled and shattered and twisted about and disguised and travestied as in love-making. Perhaps lovers become color blind and can't see the cold pure blue of truth because of the rosy mists that surround them. Cupid is blind, we know, but that was that lovers might not see faults in each other; but is the little god also

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blind to truth in all her varying forms? If not, why are lovers' lies condoned and laughed at by so many persons? Why are all stratagems fair in love as well as in war?

For myself, I do not think they are, and I should be as angry at being lied to by a man who was in love with me as by one who was not—perhaps more, for he would have disturbed the idea beneath which every woman hides the man she loves, and that is a real misfortune.

As soon as you recognize a man for a liar, you discount every virtue he appears to possess, and almost doubt your own eyesight with regard to him.

The lover must tell "nothing but the truth" if he would preserve the good opinion of his beloved, but even he need not tell all the truth.

Women, with that instinct for self-torture so thoroughly developed in the sex, always hasten in the beginning of a courtship to inquire:

"Did you ever love any one before you saw me?" and then, "Did you ever kiss a girl before you kissed me?"

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If the poor fellow says "Yes," he finds himself the subject of more reproaches, more distrust, more innuendoes and suspicions than he can live down in the course of a long life. His offense is neither forgiven nor forgotten until that dreary time arrives when the wife cares no longer whom he has kissed or when.

But what is the poor fellow to do? Of course, he has kissed a dozen or so of girls before he ever saw her, and if he denies it point blank he entails upon himself the revenges of conscience and honor, which are as bad in their way as the reproaches of his sweetheart; also there is a certain unwillingness to falsely accuse himself of being a "Miss Nancy" who has never dared to kiss a pretty girl. So what is he to do?

I don't know, I am sure. Far be it from me to suggest that a lie is ever justifiable. So let us settle it by advising the girls to remember the old adage:

"Ask me no questions, and I'll tell you no lies."

XXIV.

THE HELPLESSNESS OF WOMEN.

IT is the fashion in these days to talk very grandly and much about the equal rights of women with men, their equal capacity for nearly all occupations, offices and honors, and above all their right to regulate and control their own affairs, whether political, financial, social or domestic. I, as a woman, stand up stoutly for my own sex; I do most firmly believe them to be in all but brute strength the equal of man, and in spiritual and moral strength very frequently his superior. I admire women, I love women, I long and work for the advancement of women; but, as a woman not without powers of observation and a wide experience of the world, I cannot but see a certain side of the truth not often brought forward by women, and not at all understood by men, and this is the

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inherent helplessness of woman in a struggle with man.

Possibly this helplessness is largely due to hereditary prejudice on the part of man, hereditary self-distrust on the part of woman, but it is also largely due to the inherent natures of the two sexes. Every virile man has a vein of brutality in his composition, more or less deftly buried beneath the surface of his civilization, and every woman is at heart timid of encountering this brutality—that is to say, every womanly woman is.

Almost any man brought into business relations with a woman not his employee meets her propositions or arguments with either an air of good-natured tolerance, or disquieted contempt, or skeptical scrutiny, or of magnanimous acceptance, perhaps harder to bear than any other of the demonstrations of his superiority.

Let a woman try to argue a political point, or point of statecraft, or political economy with a man, and she usually receives some such answer) as the famous insult offered by Gladstone, I

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think, to some titled woman who earnestly implored him to advocate some measure. Listening with an amused smile to all she had to say, he simply ejaculated at the end, "Oh, you darling!" and passed on, as carelessly good-humored as if he had been listening to the prattle of a pretty child. Or, if the man is not as benevolent as Gladstone, he may reply in the spirit of Napoleon, who assured Mme. de Stäel that the most valuable woman in his empire was the one who has borne most sons for France; or again, after the manner of Henry VIII. of England, who bade the nuns who tried to argue for their right to live their own lives in their own way: "Go spin, you jades; go spin!"

To epitomize the three utterances, women in general are to men in general either "darlings," or mothers of children, or household and domestic machines. Within these limits woman receives admiration, protection and a certain amount of appreciation from every grade of men, but let her step outside these

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limits, let her try to meet man upon his own intellectual or authoritative platform, and her disadvantage is at once made apparent, and her helplessness to overcome it stares her in the face.

No man ever meets her and converses upon momentous subjects precisely as he does with another man, and until this is the case there are no true equal rights for the woman. The woman seeks an interview with her business man or lawyer; she wishes certain things done and done at once; the business man or the lawyer assures her with an air of indulgent patience that what she suggests cannot be done, at least not in her way and at her time; that to sell, or to buy, or to invest, or to do whatever it is she wishes to do is not possible, or if possible not desirable, and she had better leave it all in his hands and rest secure that he will do what is for the best. Now just here comes in the helplessness of which I speak. The woman feels confident that the thing she wishes *could* be done, and that it would be well that it should be done, but

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she lacks the habit of command, the self-confidence, the weight of will, that would enable her to hold her own without agitation or struggle.

A woman can no more hold her own against the well-trained masculine mind in matters of business, the law or politics, than she can against the well-trained masculine muscle in a pugilistic encounter, and this is what I mean by the inherent helplessness of woman. She may be better informed than the man, she may have a deep-rooted conviction that she is right, but she does not dare to take the thing into her own hands and manage it in a manner contrary to that advised by the man, who claims to know that she is wrong.

Another point of a woman's inherent helplessness is her sensitiveness. The man's sneer, or his half-veiled contempt for her opinion, or his exaggerated politeness and deference, all tell upon her courage and beat it down as if with blows of a fist or the stinging cuts of a whip. She feels wounded, hurt, ashamed even,

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while remaining sure that she is in the right. She withdraws from the contest, apparently defeated; but, like Galileo, secretly murmuring, "But nevertheless it does move."

In fact, Galileo is a conspicuous illustration of my theory. He had quicker perceptions and a keener insight, more courageous theories and more faith in his own intuitions than the whole college of cardinals with the pontiff included; but when he propounded these theories he found himself opposed to the solid phalanx of the ages in the form of a governing class, who intended to remain governors. He was defeated by frowns and sneers and smiles and jeers, behind which lay the power of life and death. Beaten down and overwhelmed, he signed the recantation of his profession of truth, made an humble apology for having been brighter than his masters, and went away muttering the recantation which we have quoted. I wonder how many women have walked out of the office, the study, the back parlor, the vestry, when they have held an interview with some male arbiters of their

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destinies, their heads upright, their cheeks glowing, their eyes bright with anger and unshed tears, their hearts hot with defeat and humiliation, muttering to themselves in one form or another, "But for all that it does move!"

Another element is woman's helplessness in her relations with man in her love of being loved, and this desire in its various developments is perhaps *the* root of a woman's nature. Every woman has it, even the coarsest termagant, the hardest and boldest wrangler for her rights—every one of them in the core of her heart longs to be loved by somebody, to be the first object in somebody's life, to have some one to whom she may turn and be sure of welcome and of sympathy. It is one of the very best and most precious factors of womanhood, but, alas! it is one of its most terrible dangers.

A woman with no one to love her is the most miserable of creatures. She loses half her value in her own eyes. She is unable to do justice to the best of her nature. She either hardens and becomes cold, defiant, bitter and

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narrow, or she withers and languishes like spring flowers in an east wind. Perhaps she does not know her own need. Perhaps she scoffs at love and declares herself strong enough to live without it, and says, as did a famous literary woman:

“I am of the oak oak, and do not understand women who are of the vine viney, and must have something to cling to.”

And yet this very woman clung to her kindred, and her adopted child with a really noble devotion. Sometimes a loveless woman cherishes a dog, a bird, a cat, and bestows upon the little brute a wealth of love enough to enrich a monarch; sometimes she buys the love of a companion or of a servant; sometimes she becomes a philanthropist and distributes her unused affection over whole armies of orphans and phalanxes of widows; sometimes if she is of a certain temperament she becomes “a religious” and joins a sisterhood, devoting their lives to good works and their hearts to God. In that case she tells herself that she needs no

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earthly outlet for her affections; that her entire nature is turned into the channel of adoring love for the Divine Being, and she probably feels that she thus secures a higher place in his affections than her more mundane sisters can hope to hold.

It is a heroic choice, a noble life, but who can doubt that it must hold moments of chill disappointment, of withering insufficiency, of terrible despair? In this world human creatures live in bodies. They are surrounded by earthly needs and cares and sympathies, and to deny or to starve all these is to defeat the very purpose of our being. A mortal woman needs mortal love, and she will seek it in one form or another, if she is at liberty, as surely as a housing pigeon seeks her dovecote or a perishing deer seeks the water.

I do not say that this all-powerful thirst applies always or entirely to the love of man and woman naturally terminating in marriage. A woman cares for the love of her own sex, for the love of her employees, for the love of her

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friends, her circle, her society, be it a large or a small body. Men say women have a passion for admiration, an appetite for flattery, a thirst for applause. True, true enough! But all these cravings are but forms of the great craving for love which lives at the root of all. One who loves *does* admire, *does* flatter, *does* applaud. These are some of the almost invariable signs and signals of love, and the instinct of the woman leads her to seek these signs and signals, although her reason whispers that they are false lights, mere *igni fatui* poorly counterfeiting the real sun and moon of her existence, and very likely to lead her into a dark and dismal bog, whence she issues mired and torn and weary.

It is not well to accept these shams, even though we bitterly tell ourselves that since we cannot have the real thing we will take what at least resembles it. If a person cannot have diamonds, she had better not try to persuade herself or the world that Rhinestones are just as good, although she may choose to wear them; but, just as there are women who *will* glitter,

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though it be in Rhinestones, so there are women, and probably the majority of the sex, who will have that ornament more precious than diamonds—that crown of love which proclaims its wearer a queen indeed, and if it be but a pinchbeck and tinsel crown she will wear it all the same, although her own aching heart cry incessantly:

“It is no crown. I am no queen. My kingdom has gone from me, and I am desolate.”

Well, to come back rather tardily to our muton—to the discussion of woman’s helplessness in her relations with the other sex.

She hates to do or say anything to forfeit her position in any man’s estimation. Of course she does not expect or wish her broker, her lawyer, her pastor, or her political antagonist, or her intellectual opponent to be “in love” with her, in the ordinary meaning of the phrase, but she does want, probably unconsciously to herself, that he should feel attracted to her; that he should like, admire, speak kindly, perhaps tenderly, of her to other persons; that he should

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be sorry to see her go and glad to have her come again. All this natural and instinctive desire underlies her whole conversation and conduct, weakens the strength of her opposition to what her intuitions warn her is false or dangerous, softens her phraseology and not very infrequently prompts her to say in the end:

"Very well, you know best. I will do what you say," when the indignant common sense at the back of her mind is clamoring:

"That's nonsense! It isn't at all as you say! I shall lose my money, or my case, or my success, if I do thus and so!"

Every woman knows that, though she be wise as Minerva, pure as Diana, regal as Juno, or even beautiful as Venus, if she wearies a man, if she claims the time and attention he wants to bestow upon his business, his pleasure, or more especially upon himself, he ceases to wish for her presence—in fact, he grows tired of her—and in the end feels her to be a bore, and avoids her. I suppose most women would rather die than to know they were thus re-

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garded by any number, perhaps any one, of the men of their acquaintance, and if they feel themselves in proximity to any such position they will hastily sacrifice any theory, any scheme or any advantage, and withdraw from the position their reason bids them hold with tenacity.

And here, of course, is the point I have intended to make. The woman's need of love, of liking or of approval from man is a terrible element of weakness in her nature. She is her own enemy. She is made helpless by her own best and sweetest characteristic. The motto of her career is, after all, no more than this, although the motto must be expanded to its very widest and most general limits:

“All for love, and the world well lost!”

XXV.

AND SO THEY MARRY NEITHER KNOWING THE OTHER.

PEOPLE always have been asking each other conundrums and riddles and puzzles of various kinds ever since the world began. It seems to be an instinct of the human family, and almost always of a disagreeable nature. We are told that Samson, by way of making things pleasant during his wedding festivities, asked a riddle of his "best man" and ushers, with a sort of wager attached to it. If they guessed it within the week the bridegroom was to give each of them a new suit of clothes, and if they did not each of them was to give him one. It is a very entertaining story throughout, but not in place just here except as it is the earliest recorded instance of a conundrum. It was not fairly

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guessed, and the result was a good deal of family unpleasantness, a divorce and the deaths of several hundred persons, including the bride and all her family.

Then comes the Sphinx with her stupid little riddle about the animal that in the morning walks on four legs, at noon on two and in the evening on three. It is a very poor affair, looked at as a riddle, but pretty serious when one remembers that Madam Sphinx was in the habit of devouring those who "gave it up." What an advance the world has made, to be sure, since the days of *Cedipus* and the Sphinx! Nowadays instead of being devoured if you do not guess a conundrum, some one kindly explains it to you, and you have the opportunity to smile satirically and blandly while saying: "Oh, really! Is that all?"

For my part I never try to guess conundrums, the other course is so much more amusing.

But as in most other things, nature excels man in this sort of puzzle making, and the best of it is, from her point of view, that she can in-

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flict her own penalties for the failure to give a correct answer, and we are quite powerless to resist her decrees. Perhaps the completest puzzle of all those in the dear old lady's abundant store, and one that has never, so far as I know, been successfully answered by any son of Adam or daughter of Eve, is a series of questions relating to the due relation of the sexes to each other, with minor queries as to the nature of woman and the nature of man, asked in each case of some member of the opposite sex. The beauty of it is, that the questions are so fascinating that both man and woman insist upon studying them, and unwarned by the example of others they put so much of their time and life and interest into the matter that when the day comes that they must "give it up" they are too weary of all life's problems to care to take up another.

Oh, the mistakes that men and women make with regard to each other! Oh, the fatal shipwreck they encounter in trying to personally test their theories as to the true solution of the

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puzzle upon which all their forefathers and foremothers have broken their teeth, and yet never come at the kernel of the nut!

And with what gallant confidence each new aspirant comes before the Sphinx and says: "I can guess your charming riddle, although these others have failed. I understand the nature of at least one woman or one man, and I will stake my whole life upon giving the correct answer."

The Sphinx smiles—and that cold, satiric, incomprehensible smile was caught most cleverly long since by the Egyptian sculptors, and fixed upon the immortal stone which after the lapse of ages tells its story more clearly than words can put it.

The Sphinx, as those great artists knew, is the prototype of nature in her conundrum-asking mood—the subtle amusement, the bitter satire, the veiled and conscious power of the great mother as she plays with her children, like a tigress with her cubs, is all there. She is but a sportive mother at the best, that old nature!

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She flings her children into the water to teach them to swim for their lives. If they have nerve and strength to strike out vigorously, they are safe, but if they are weak or timid or make mistakes, why, she lets them drown as not worth saving. In the old story of Saturn and Ops, the children were devoured by the parents, and earth and nature are both one. And so the poor little wretches go on century after century sinking or swimming, as the case may be, always trying to get the better of nature, and very seldom succeeding even when they plume themselves upon having done so.

Look at the manner in which men and women practically reply to the query as to which member of the opposite sex is the one best adapted for a lifelong companionship, this being, as we all know, one of the most important of nature's conundrums. Every one of us at some period or other has found it propounded to us, and probably every one of us has decided it in a manner differing from that we should have selected had we better understood the matter.

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A man sees a woman at some social gathering, it matters not if it is at the reception of a duchess, or a queen of society in our own country, or if it is at a "sociable" or a dance in some little country town. Nature is pre-eminently "no respecter of persons," and works in the one case precisely as she does in the other. The girl is well dressed, gay, smiling and evidently pleased with the young man's attentions. They pass an hour together and part with mutual good will. A dozen or so of such interviews, a few calls at the family dwelling, a ride, a drive, a walk or two, and he is prepared to offer himself and she to accept him. If any one having the right demands of him the *raison d'être*, the solid foundation of his selection and consequent engagement, he replies that is all right, that he understands Fanny thoroughly, and is quite sure she will make him happy. As to whether he is quite sure to make her happy, it is usually the last thing he thinks about. "What sort of a girl is she?" asks the mother of the happy youth, recalling the mistake she made.

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“Oh, she’s a jolly girl; as jolly a girl as ever you saw,” replies the wise young man judicially. “She is as light-hearted as a bird, always full of fun and laughter, always ready for anything proposed in the way of amusement, good-natured and obliging, great taste in dress, and as neat as a pin—in fact, she is just the kind of a girl I like, and can get on with. I hate these prim, mopish, proper sort of girls who are always getting tired and faint and frightened of everything, from a spider to a cow, and mustn’t get their feet wet, and all that.”

So they marry, and he finds that he knew as little about his wife as she did about him. The high spirits and constant cheerful alacrity in matters of amusement were the gift of youth and health, and shade with beautiful ease into peevishness, discontent, and a restless desire for new amusements and distractions. The constant attentions of the suitor give place to the indifference and carelessness of the husband, and the disappointed wife utters complaints

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long and loud that he is by no means the devoted slave she was led to believe him. He retorts that if she were as cheerful and amiable, as well dressed and trim as he once had known her, he should be as much in love—it is he who is disappointed, and has a right to complain, etc. The matrimonial question as to “scissors” is well started, and goes on until one or the other gets flung into the well, or perhaps flings himself or herself into some Dead Sea of despair.

But after all, a man’s failure to comprehend the real character of the woman he selects as wife is not nearly so disastrous as the corresponding failure of the woman to understand the man before she commits her life to his keeping. The Sphinx gives to the one a cruel blow of her lion-like paw, but the other she devours bodily, leaving but the crushed semblance, the simulacrum, as the ancients used to say, of the bright and hopeful creature who dared try to answer her fatal riddle.

Say what we will of the equality of the sexes, and the ability of woman to hold her own in the

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battle of life, the fact remains that when and if a woman loses she loses a great deal more than the man. A woman plays for heavier stakes than the man, and is so reckless in her game that she never pauses until she has flung her all upon the board. Take a case: A woman meets a man who at once devotes himself to her, and both by word and deed professes to hold his life as of no value except as it may be devoted to her service.

Now no woman who lives is insensible to the delicate flattery of such a profession—no woman so strong or so self-reliant as not to be pleased and attracted by what seems the sincere and thorough devotion of a man who is admired and sought by other women, and is able to hold his own among other men. Even if she is happy and prosperous and surrounded by other friends, a man who so addresses her, or without any spoken words so comports himself, is sure to win a favorable place in her regard; but if, alas, the woman is lonely and tired and oppressed with the weight of duties and obliga-

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tions too heavy for her strength, and which no one helps her to carry, then if one of these plausible and much professing men comes along, and in every look and motion and act says: "Oh, how I long to help you and to comfort you, and to take all that heavy burden off your shoulders!" she listens, raises her eyes to heaven in thanksgiving for such unlooked-for succor, and gladly, yes, eagerly, gives herself and all she has and all she hopes and fears and loves into his hands. She throws her entire fortune upon the table. She stakes body, soul, mind, the memories of the past and hopes of the future upon this single turn of the wheel. She exclaims to listening Fate: "I have solved your riddle! I have found the answer to your conundrum of life! I have at last met with the answer to your terrible enigma, O Fate!"

They marry; for the cruel game is not made absolute until this bond is riveted. While a woman is betrothed her good angel may possibly come to the rescue, and give her some warning by which she may escape with no more

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than a heavy blow and an undying scar; but when once she is married there is but one door of escape besides death, and it is a question which is the more cruel.

Few men, whatever may be their disposition, are the same after marriage that they are before. In the very best specimen of the sex there is a perhaps unconscious desire and effort to appear better than he really is during the period of courtship. He exercises a perpetual restraint upon the coarser and more violent traits of his nature. He sacrifices his convenience, his comfort, his tastes and inclinations to those of the object of his pursuit.

He likes to walk, and she prefers driving; he drives. He loves to be out-of-doors, she prefers a shaded parlor; he sits in the parlor. He dotes upon athletics and she likes to hear poetry; he reads poetry, and so on. I do not say that the girl or woman is right to accept or to exact all this self-sacrifice. I will, indeed, allow that she is apt to become selfish, and perhaps unreasonable, but at this period of the game she

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is blindfolded, both by fate and by the man, who never once speaks candidly and honestly to her, but is always insisting that her wishes are dearer to him than his own and that to do what he does not like to do, and give up all that he does like, is precisely what he enjoys and wishes.

The woman believes him, and accepts the rôle of despot, which is thus forced upon her, and she wonders that she is not even mistress of her own life, cannot arrange her hours, or her pursuits, or the dainty environments of her home as she has always done heretofore. She thought to find shelter in a tower of strength, and she finds herself captive in a squalid and hateful prison, while he who was to have been her devoted knight and *preux chevalier*, becomes at once her jailer and her fellow-captive.

All this because, poor woman, she failed to correctly guess the riddle propounded to her by that unknown power which we call nature or fate, or by way of parable, the Sphinx. The riddle of human character! Did anybody ever

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fully solve it? Many of us have tried, but can any one of us say with conviction that we have succeeded? For even at the last—even after the man whom we at first considered has discovered that he has not married the woman he supposed, and after, in the latter case, the woman has found out her own woeful mistake—can we set it down as certain that either one of them finally reads the other's character aright?

I firmly believe not. At first each saw virtues that either were too evanescent or too much matter of pretense to be of any lasting service, and when these had vanished each discovered faults and disagreeabilities, and perhaps vices, that seemed to comprise the whole character; but after all, does not truth lie in the middle here, as in most other cases? Neither man nor woman is quite as good as we at first imagined, or quite as bad as we afterward concluded—in fact, we never quite understand from first to last; we never get the true answer to the conundrum.

The Sphinx has the best of it every time.

XXVI.

WOMAN IN HER MOOD.

WHY? is a question asked, in infinite variations, of women and about them. And the woman's answer, as likely as not, is the proverbial woman's reason—"Oh, because." It is for this men call us illogical, inconsistent, inscrutable, and sometimes we admit, with ingenuous frankness, that we can't quite understand ourselves.

Perhaps not, and yet I believe that about this mystery, like most other mysteries, there is a great deal of fiction and nonsense. Take every woman in her humor, and she is not such a complex being, after all. Woman's caprice is man's opportunity—that is, when he has the wit to seize it, which is by no means the rule—and as to her being a puzzle, or a bore, to herself, such a thing, even if true, would be quite

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unnecessary if she would but keep a judicious eye upon her own moods and tenses.

Now, let no gentle reader tremble lest I give away the secrets of the soul's prison house and betray our sex's natural defenses into the hands of the enemy—or, in other words, to some masculine reader who may have the intrepid curiosity to explore this page. No, indeed, not for the world. All I desire to do is to glance at the sources of those whims, humors and fickle fancies which, no doubt, are often determining factors in a woman's life. And having accounted for these, as well as may be, I should like, if possible, to analyze them sufficiently to distinguish honest impulse from caprice, and to separate earnestness from *ennui*.

It is all very well to say that nature has made woman a *giourette* and that changing her mind is her inalienable prerogative. Fallacy! The truth is that—to reverse the old law—the woman of vapors is not born, but made. The process begins like the Chinese custom of compressing the feet in early childhood. From first to last

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she is removed by conventionality further and further from the healthy conditions of nature, in the matter of sleeping, for example, which, when you come to think of it, constitutes about one-third of our entire existence. The boys usually sleep alone, and perhaps have each a separate room while, partly to provide for this comfort of their brothers, and partly from mere custom, the girls are packed away two or three together, or, worse still, put to bed with their elders. Then, as they grow up, their tender little bodies are so handicapped and weighted down by all the formidable paraphernalia of the modern feminine wardrobe—the tight, high-heeled shoes, the heavy draggling skirts, the taut elastics, the innumerable pins, and heaven only knows what other devices of wire, bone, buckram and steel—that not a muscle can enjoy its free, flexible movement, while the nerves are “set on edge,” and every movement is painfully distorted. Of course, a cramped body breeds warped ideas and a narrow mind. Then, the physical freedom,

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exercise, amusements and recuperative hygiene under which men develop and thrive, are for the most part denied to women, if only by reason of costume and conventionality. Even the outdoor sports, which a broadening civilization at last consents to regard as not unbecoming ladies, they can seldom enjoy independently and by themselves. The Turkish and Russian baths are mostly for the luxurious few who can afford them as home accessories. Such solace as tobacco may afford is forbidden them, although every argument in its favor for men would apply with tenfold force to the mercurial and high-strung temperament of womankind.

Under these conditions, is it any wonder if a woman is "uncertain, coy and hard to please;" that she should sometimes say no when she means yes, or that she should reconsider a thing two or three times with baffling suddenness and with diametrically opposite conclusions? The fact is, she is chained to the traditional rock of physical discomfort and moral oppression, and becomes with desperate eagerness the first

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knight errant who shows a disposition to set her free. When such an opportunity does come along, and she has the courage or recklessness to accept it, regardless of worldly considerations, she is pointed out as an extreme case of the whimsical folly known to be characteristic of her sex.

Most Europeans who visit this country, as Messrs. Max O'Rell and Paul Bourget have done, with the gracious purpose of telling us all about ourselves, declare that here is the earthly paradise of womankind. *Cherchez la femme* with us, they say, and you find her upon a pedestal, *fêted* and caressed, the object of something like a chivalric devotion.

They might have added that too often she is spoiled. Really, to be killed with kindness is not an enviable destiny. We have just been considering the case of those who are crochety merely from physical exasperation and the petty material annoyances of life. There is another class, perhaps larger still, whose morbid moods arise from conditions exactly the re-

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verse—that is to say—from an excess of effete comfort, if not of idle luxury, and a woeful lack of both physical and mental occupation. These are the easy prey of the demon *Ennui*.

The philosopher (pessimistic) hath said want and *ennui* are the two poles of human life. The further we are removed from the one, the nearer we approach the other. A woman with every material want provided for, with nothing to “worry” about and everything to enjoy, and whose future is one long unbroken perspective of flowery ease, is indeed to be pitied. Having no real emotions to exaggerate, she falls back upon imaginary ones, and these, when once allowed to gain control, are the most tyrannical of evil genii. They drive a woman, through the very defects of her qualities of heart and impulse, to the most extreme inconsistencies. They induce fits of morbid personal vanity, in which *il faut souffrir pour être belle* and then suffer more because beauty is not attained—or, being attained, is ineffective. They make her a ridiculous *malade imaginaire*. They awaken

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a supersensitive conscience, or perhaps violent religious fervor, which expresses itself in all sorts of misdirected charities and superfluous zeal. Again, these sham emotions find expression in a series of capricious yet demonstrative friendships with individuals of her own sex—friendships as short-lived and tempestuous as they are capricious. These, and a hundred similar humors, are bred of *ennui*, pure and simple. And herein, if I may venture to suggest it without indiscretion, lies the clew to the restlessness and impatience which are summed up at the present day under the general head of “the new womanhood.”

But, caprice and *ennui* aside, it is in love that the innate and incorrigible humors, the legendary inconsistency and caprice of womanhood most strikingly assert themselves. “She is a woman, therefore to be wooed,” and according to the mere accidents of the wooing, or because the sky is so blue on a certain day, she takes long chances with fate. Many a modern marriage, not particularly unhappy in itself, is dis-

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solved as it was contracted—with insouciant good will, or at worst indifference, on both sides. Other marriages, ill devised and thoroughly wretched, are stuck to through thick and thin merely from bravado or false pride. What a confessional it would be if men and women were to tell with frank unreserve their precise reasons for marrying! Many, of course, have an eye to material welfare and advancement. Some men marry from a sense of duty, and not a few women from mere curiosity.

Tennyson's "Lord of Burleigh"—the story of a rich nobleman who, in the disguise of a landscape painter, courted and won a simple village maiden, who was *eunuyée* to death when she found out the deception—is based upon absolute fact. The belle of a dozen seasons, rich, beautiful, sought after, refuses the *élite* of marriageable parties in two hemispheres, and then at a day's notice weds an impoverished Bohemian, simply because she is touched at observing, during the dance, that the elbows of his coat sleeve are frayed and shiny from assiduous (and

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presumably ill-requitted) desk work! Why do they do it? Why does the wind change?

Such moods in woman have ever been and doubtless must always be regarded as the outcropping of deep and divine instincts. At any rate, there they are, and what better course than to study and chart them, even as the multitudinous seas? In this connection, evidently, the proper study of mankind is woman.

One of the most moving historiettes of the late unfortunate Guy de Maupassant was entitled, if I remember rightly, "Remorse." It related the despairing love of a man who worshipped from afar a splendid creature of the gay world, in which both laughed and sighed away their youth. It was only after many years, when both had grown old, saddened and sedate, that he ventures to declare the passion of his prime. "Would you," he asks fervently in a momentary fanning of the old flame—"would you on a certain night which we both remember well, have listened to the declaration which I make you now, and what would have been your

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answer?" She replies, simply, "My answer would have been, Yes, with all my heart." Ah, and it is now too late!

A woman's humors, then, are somewhat like the Sphinx's riddle. But here let the simile stop short. For not only is the woman herself the riddle, easy enough for him who has the heart to try, but she is also the prize to be won in the successful solution.

XXVII.

THE SOCIAL SLANG OF PARIS.

WHETHER it is owing to the French origin of my family, to the fact that the French tongue was as familiar to me as English when I was a child, or simply because of my many visits to the "City of Light," as its inhabitants proudly call Paris, I do not know; but it has always been one of my favorite amusements to investigate the picturesque intricacies of the French language in all its ramifications, and surely no more amusing study can exist than the branch of a language which is known as slang.

French slang is wonderfully replete with imagery. Is a man very keen and impossible to hoodwink? French slang will inform you that "he has not caught cold in his eyes." This, of course, illustrates a medical truth, that

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people with inflamed eyes are temporarily blind, therefore that the person in question is clear-sighted in the extreme. To express that one has an excellent opinion of one's self, it is casually remarked that the person "does not wipe his nose with his foot." That curious action seems to denote moral and physical self-abasement. This phrase is classic, since Molière uses it in "Tartuffe."

Actors complain bitterly in France that a comrade insists on "pulling the bedquilt toward him," which means that he tries to concentrate attention on himself to the exclusion of others, as a selfish person rolls himself up in the bedclothes, regardless of his companion's discomfort.

Retiring for the night is characterized as "wrapping up the meat in its cloth." This rather obscure expression is derived from the fact that in France butchers hang legs of mutton in front of a snowy background of white napkins, and at nightfall carefully envelop the aforesaid legs of mutton in the above-mentioned

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napkins, and tuck them away for the night. "Chic," an expression which in its broad meaning of good style is now incorporated in the language, considered as slang, describes something non-existent. An author writes "*de chic*" when he discourses of something whereof he knows nothing; an artist who paints a picture without a model says that he did it "*de chic*."

Many French slang phrases are very commonly used in polite society. It is by no means unusual to hear a lady taking leave of her hostess remark casually, "I cannot stay, for I have a gnawing worm at the door." This mysterious announcement simply means that she has a carriage by the hour, and, of course, the longer it is kept, the larger the hole gnawed in the finances. Another generic name for a cab is "*sapin*" (pine tree), in allusion to the fact that they are built of pine wood. Umbrellas are christened "*pepins*," as they were supposed, on what authority I do not know, to have been invented by Pepin, one of the early kings of France. I have seen foreigners, deeply

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learned in the classic French, stunned and distracted by the (to them) incomprehensible remark that some one had "left a pepin in the sapin," which meant that an umbrella had been found in a cab.

An expressive slang phrase is the one by which you gently intimate to a person that his presence is unwelcome; you request him to "go to the Boulevards and look if I am there." This, although indirect, is most certainly categorical. If a thing is utterly impossible of execution, it is said that "there is no wick," which would undoubtedly prevent a lamp from being practicable. A wild-goose chase is called "a search for a bluebird," and a thing that will never happen is announced as waiting for "the week of four Thursdays," and when you say something that were best unsaid, you "put your feet in the dish." The height of condemnation is reached when you say of any one, "He is as stupid as the good Lord is good." Unhappily, with the present mania for abbreviating, the words "is good" are sometimes omitted,

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to the horror of the uninitiated, which is intensified by the placidity of those who know the whole saying.

To give useless advice is "to stab water with a sword," and to go on an expedition and be disappointed is "to break your nose against a closed door." "The holy name of a little dog" is a very emphatic oath, and to call a Frenchman a canary bird is a deadly insult, for which complaints are sometimes lodged in courts of justice. If you are in very unpleasant predicament, they say, "you are spinning bad cotton," and if you come definitely to grief in any way you are said to be "in the water." If anything at once surprising and disagreeable occurs, the shock is supposed to leave you "with your four horseshoes in the air." If you refresh exhausted nature with a drink of absinthe, its green color causes the remark that you are "strangling a parrot," and if you drink champagne of the Clicquot brand, they say "you make eyes at the widow," in allusion to *Veuve Clicquot*, whose name adorns the bottle.

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The word "pig" is considered most vulgar in French. If you wish to designate the animal, you refer to him as "the gentleman dressed in silk," as "the companion of St. Anthony;" and yet the expression "my little pink pig" is a term of endearment among plebeians, as is also the term "my little cabbage." If one suffers from nausea, they say one is "as sick as a walrus," and if you die, that you "have broken your pipe," unless you have been guillotined, when they say "you have sneezed in the basket," in allusion to the fact that the criminal's head drops into a wicker receptacle prepared for it; and if you are hanged, you are supposed to have "danced a jig without any floor." A man condemned to be beheaded is said to be "about to be shortened." If for murder, because "he cooled off an individual," and the cart which takes the criminal's body to the grave is graphically described as the "cold meat wagon."

Servants who leave a place are said to have "given back their aprons," and when they dip unduly into the marketing money, and charge

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large prices for small things, they are said to "set the handle of the market-basket dancing." The derivation of that phrase no one seems to know. An unreliable person is designated as "a basket with a hole in it," and a bore is termed "a shaver." If any one protests loudly against anything, he is said to utter "the screams of a peacock." If you are restless in your movements it is asserted that you "wiggle like the devil in a holy water font." A person who accepts flattery complacently is said to be "drinking milk," presumably because that beverage is easily swallowed. The equivalent of the English phrase in reply to the announcement of an old and well-known fact as something new and original is existent, though where we would declare that "the Dutch had taken Holland," a Frenchman would say sardonically that "Henri Quatre is on the Pont Neuf Bridge," in allusion to the fact that the bridge in question had been adorned, ever since its erection in the days of Louis XIII., by a very handsome equestrian statue of the fourth

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Henry in all his glory. Many comic songs have been woven round this statue, the most popular and most modern being the one entitled "The Statue's Wail," in which the bronze monarch sets forth his woes with the recurring refrain :

" I have no umbrella,
When it's fine I can't go in;
When there comes a pouring rain,
I am soaked right to the skin."

This does not sound profound nor telling, but, such as it is, all Paris howled, whistled, and hummed it, in season and out of season.

Quantities of the slang phrases of Paris originate in the comic songs. At one time a popular melody was set to a song, whereof the burden was :

" Halloo, there's Mathieu!
Old man, how do you do? "

It had a tremendous run, and was killed in a very odd manner. A miserable murderer, named Jean Mathieu, was guillotined, and as

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usual the Place de la Roquette, where executions take place, was filled with a noisy rabble. The execution was rather late, which irritated the waiting multitude, and finally, when the prison doors were opened and the criminal appeared, half dead with terror and dragged along by two of his guards, some one, more irreverent than the rest, shouted:

“ Halloo, there's Mathieu!
Old man, how do you do?”

and the whole crowd took up the song and danced in time to its cadence. The contrast to the wretch shivering on the brink of eternity, and the unseemly mirth of the crowd was so ghastly, that the horror felt by the spectators and shared by those who heard of the occurrence caused the once popular song to be promptly tabooed.

One of the most in vogue of all modern slang phrases was the peculiarly senseless remark. “You would think it was veal.” This denotes admiration and approval. A glorious sunset

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or a pretty woman was alike greeted by the same enthusiastic remark, "You would think it was veal." This phrase originated in a comic song, with an inordinate number of verses, of which the following example will give an idea :

" Said the fair Juliet, in a tone of appeal
'Tis not the lark, you would think it was veal."

Anything more strangely idiotic cannot be imagined, but its very silliness was an additional attraction, and the phrase ran like wild-fire through all strata of society.

All these ridiculous comic songs are made popular through the medium of open-air concerts on the Champs Elysées. Picturesque places they are, with their blazing festoons of colored lights, their succession of singers, who vie with each other as to which can possess the worst voice and sing the most complacently out-of-tune inane ballads. All traveling Americans know these places, where one can dine sumptuously in a restaurant at the back of the inclosure, and then come out to sit on the high

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balcony to sip coffee and enjoy the intellectual (?) treat afforded by the performance on the tiny stage opposite. When any of the more fashionable songs are sung, the whole audience joins in the chorus and keeps time by flapping their spoons against their glasses. The result is strangely discordant; but as the music fills its perpetrators with intense and soulful enjoyment, objection would be cruel and heartless, besides being utterly useless. as these concerts are virtually Liberty Halls.

To return to slang pure and simple. If one sits up very late and pines for soda water in the morning hours, his sense of *malaise* is described as "an ache of the hair." If renouncing the solution of a problem you "give your tongue to cats," and friskiness of conduct is denominated as "throwing one's cap over the mill." Should a husband pay attention to any other woman than his wife, "he sticks a penknife into the marriage contract." The dignified gentleman who acts as censor and judges plays, as does the Lord Chamberlain in London, is called by the

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strangely incongruous name of "Anastasia." Wherefore this peculiar nickname, no one can tell, any more than they can unravel the origin of the nickname for the guillotine, which grew-some machine is called Louissette. If you run at full speed, they say you "put your legs on your neck;" the fury of a storm is gauged by the fact that is "too bad weather to put even one's mother-in-law out-of-doors." A sarcastic way of saying that a man is stupid is to remark that "where there is nothing, the king collects no taxes," and a bow-legged person is said to "squint with his legs." If you buy things on credit, you get them "on your eye," and if you have savings you have put aside a "pear for your thirst," and if you pay cash down you have settled "a ruby on the finger-nail." Why? Ah! that I do not know.

I fear we have drifted into what might be denominated the erudite section of slang; for, as a rule, profound erudition and dense incomprehensibility go hand in hand. Under these circumstances it is better to close the chapter.

XXVIII.

THE AGREEABLE MAN.

OME and dine on Tuesday; I want you to meet such an agreeable man," said my friend, and I went.

But the agreeable man was not at all to my taste, although he seemed to fancy himself immensely. He was fluent and flowery of speech, and he had seen almost everything under the sun in every corner of the world, but for that very reason he was fatiguing. One could speak of nothing without eliciting such a flood of information that one was nearly drowned in it, and seized upon any straw to reach land again, only to be submerged afresh before one had done gasping after the first deluge. And this was what I said to my friend and hostess when she unwisely insisted upon an opinion. Of

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course, she didn't like it; we never do like to have our friends refuse to look out of our eyes, although we are constantly declining to look out of theirs.

"Well, what kind of a man do you call an agreeable man if he is not?" demanded she, rather pettishly.

"What kind of man?" repeated I, musing over the question. "Why, a man who pleases me is to me an agreeable man."

"That is to say," retorted she, laughing, "if you liked that kind of a man, that is just the kind of man that would please you?"

The entrance of a visitor broke off the conversation; but, as is my habit when a social question has been raised in society, I unconsciously carry it home, and sometimes ponder it in the weary hours of sleepless nights.

What is an agreeable man, and where have I most frequently found him? demanded I of myself that afternoon as I drove around the park and exchanged salutations with a hundred or so of my acquaintances. Is it this horse-

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man? Is it this pedestrian? Is it either of these two with the tandem team, or is that dear old man in the barouche? But still the voice within said "No!" The horseman is silly and fatuous; the pedestrian is buried in abstruse studies, and is at this moment walking off a surfeit of Semitic roots before undertaking a light collation of Dead Sea fruits. The two boys with the tandem team will bring it with them to whatever reception they attend to-night, and tell everybody just what time Xerxes and Artaxerxes made last week on the trotting course, and how they are capable of beating Cyrus and Darius "into fits" at any moment.

As for the old gentleman, he is very dear and very sweet, and I make a point of talking to him for three minutes whenever we meet, but after three minutes he has told me all about his health, and where his wife is, and how warm and crowded the room is, and that is the end of our subjects of mutual interest, for he is too deaf to hear any remarks I might offer, and too self-engrossed to care to listen if he could hear.

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So collating the egotistical traveler, and the vain exquisite, and the bookworm, and the horsey pair, and the self-absorbed old gentleman, one sees that they have one fault in common, and that is selfishness, and it becomes evident that the agreeable man must not be selfish, or at least that he must, by education and good breeding, have learned so to disguise that "original sin" common to every child of Adam that it shall not offend other people. As for eliminating it, I do not suppose that is ever done, and perhaps it would not be well if it could be, for if self-preservation is the first law of nature a certain amount of selfishness is as necessary to the protection of every man as claws are to a cat; the thing is to keep those same claws sheathed in a velvet paw.

But an agreeable man must not make self his perpetual topic, especially in society or with mere acquaintances. There are, to be sure, occasions and companies when he can do nothing better than talk of himself, but he must have that divine gift of tact to know when those oc-

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casions present themselves. Between man and man I doubt if these occasions ever do present themselves, or if a man is ever interested in getting an interior view of another man's character unless in the way of business, or for legal investigation, or some other practical result.

But a woman, that is to say, an intelligent woman, is generally keenly interested in studying the "true inwardness" of masculine human nature. She loves to point out the faults she discovers and to bestow much sage advice, exhortation and warning; she loves to exclaim in pretty wonder at modes of thought and action so different from her own, to argue which method is better, and to ask explanations of what is contrary to her own experience. In fact, there are appropriate occasions when a man can establish himself as an agreeable man in no way so surely as to talk about himself; but, as I said before, he has to know how and when.

But there is one topic perfectly safe for a man to choose if a woman is his sole auditor, and that is herself. It is an infallible rule for

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being agreeable, that is to say, of course, if he knows how to treat the topic; a stranger must not plunge at once into personalities, unless, indeed, his auditor is one of those women with whom an inordinate love of flattery outruns self-respect; such women there are to whom a man in the first half hour of their acquaintance may praise her face, her figure, her dancing or her clothes, and meet with complacent acceptance, but there are other women who would meet such audacity with freezing rebuke, so that a man has need to be very careful in the beginning of an acquaintance, although he may be pretty sure that if he knows my sweet Lady Disdain long enough he will come to the same point in the end. And, then, there are so many ways of talking to a woman about herself; personal appearance is the very crudest and most elementary part of the subject, but it is capable of treatment in infinite variety.

"I am sure you like Browning," he says, and she, smiling placidly, asks:

"Why? How can you judge?"

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“Because I notice you use some of his wonderfully eloquent turns of speech. You express yourself, if I may so say, Browningsquely.”

And she is delighted!

Or he remarks: “One can see at a glance that you have traveled a great deal; that gracious and ready courtesy is only learned in the royal courts of Europe.”

Or, “I notice that you always wear lilies of the valley, and use that scent. How delicate and refined it is!”

Perhaps there is nothing so “fetching” to a woman as to have her favorite perfume and color noticed by a man to whom she has never mentioned them. Or, going deeper, he appeals to some unusual knowledge he declares her to possess upon some abstruse subject, and begs for information, or in most confidential and tentative manner he speaks of her loving nature, her sweetness of disposition, her gentle faith in the goodness of those about her, and he warns her of the danger such an innocent lamb as she incurs by trusting the wolves so fear-

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lessly. Of course he is no wolf, oh, no! But probably the innocent lamb knows the marks of a wolf quite well, and will take care of herself even while she seems implicitly to receive the warnings and revelations of her kind guide and mentor.

A man who can talk judiciously and acceptably to a woman about herself will be voted by that woman an agreeable man, and if he has a pretty large female acquaintance he will have a nucleus of admirers to proclaim this opinion.

But to be a universally agreeable man—a man whom other men will admit to be agreeable, although they won't use that word—requires something more. A man to be agreeable in general society, at a dinner party, at a reception, at any of those places, and times when a *tête-à-tête* is either impossible or in bad taste, must be able to talk to more than one person and upon impersonal topics. He must know something about a great many subjects, and yet not have the air of instructing his hearers. Nothing is much more irritating than the *ex-*

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cathedra style, when the speaker seems to mount a rostrum and hold up his hand for silence before each utterance. That was the matter with the agreeable man first mentioned, and he annoyed me so much that I resolutely forgot all the valuable information so carefully imparted.

Another rock upon which I have seen a great many men meet shipwreck is unadaptability; they talk and talk well, not too learnedly and not too satirically, but they talk upon subjects which have no interest for their audience. A gentleman once called upon me and a bright little girl who was my guest. He staid nearly two hours, and he talked almost without intermission upon some scheme for irrigating Arizona and establishing mills upon the artificial watercourses. I do not doubt that it was a most brilliant and interesting exposition, if only we had cared anything at all about the irrigation of Arizona, but my entire vitality was absorbed in the effort to keep awake and look politely interested, while my little friend made

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Punch and Judy puppets out of her Landkerchief and some tidies, and at appropriate moments bobbed Mr. Punch's head in assent or caused Columbine to caper with delight.

Certainly that man did not know how to make himself agreeable!

People sometimes ask me, knowing that I am familiar with most parts of the civilized world, where I have found the most agreeable men and the most acceptable companions.

It is a hard question to answer, for one's taste changes so much from time to time, and according to the conditions of one's own life.

In early youth I was thrown much with men of Latin blood, Spaniards and Frenchmen, and naturally learned to think their modes of thought and speech, their somewhat formal courtesy and stately grace, the most agreeable ensemble in the world. Later I have seen very much of Englishmen, and nothing can be more agreeable than the frank, honest, high-bred courtesy of a true English gentleman, although he cannot claim much of grace, vivacity or versatility.

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But to-day I give the palm to my own countrymen, for they combine the splendid strength and honor of the Englishman with the wit and worldly wisdom of the Frenchman, and the Spaniard's appreciation of and graceful devotion to women; in fact, as the people of these United States are the union of all the races of the earth, where but among their men should we look for specimens of the best qualities of all men? Perhaps this estimate will not hold good in all directions; perhaps not every American combines the romance of the Spaniard with the wit of the Frenchman, and the nobleness of the Englishman or the German ancestor of the Englishman, but the combination is very possible, and in greater or less degree I have seen it among the agreeable Americans of my acquaintance.

I said so the other day and my hearer at once inquired:

"Where most frequently? North, south, east or west?" and I replied after due consideration:

"I have found the agreeable man north, south, east *and* west."

XXIX.

TABLE MANNERS.

IN traveling a good deal by land and sea, in my own country and countries mine by adoption, I have noticed with some curiosity the different ways in which people eat, and the traits of character that employment calls forth.

Eating in public is a terrible ordeal to many people, and it is certain one can judge more of a person's social training at a first interview by observing him at table than in any other way. A rather eccentric friend of mine, wishing to engage a private secretary, invited each candidate to dinner before deciding his claims.

One of the most admirable bits of vanity of Louis XIV., grandest and smallest of monarchs, was his passion for eating in public; it was always possible for any decent person to

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gain admittance to the gallery overlooking the king's breakfast room, and nothing pleased him more than to see a crowd gazing in respectful admiration through the gilded screen to observe the dexterity with which he struck off the head of his egg, and the nicety with which he absorbed its contents. He had no fork, unfortunate man, because they were just struggling into existence, and even a century later poor Louis XVI. preferred to take the chicken joints in his fingers and tear off the meat with his teeth, while Marie Antoinette looked scornfully on and wondered how a man whose head was tottering could still care for his stomach.

But men do. You don't see them lose their appetites or looking with languid indifference upon delicate meats because their hearts are sore; if it is the liver, or the stomach, or an overnight headache, I grant you the masculine appetite may fall, but not for sentimental troubles.

Well, the grand monarque ate in public to show how delicately, how scientifically, how

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gracefully he ate, with what care and skill he conducted himself even while attending to the merely animal wants of his feelings. The sovereign people of these United States also eat in public; more so, perhaps, than any other nation in the world, for the English carry their national reserve along with them when they travel, and if a private dinner room can be obtained they secure it, or a lunch is served in the sacred privacy of a first-class railway carriage, or in the private coach on deck. The French partake of light refreshments in public a good deal, but the *pension* with them is not so popular as the boarding house with us, and one does not see whole families, as in our country, settle down permanently to a course of public life, where not only meals, but domestic difficulties, courtships, quarrels, and most other incidents of life are kindly offered to public inspection and amusements. The Germans are an essentially domestic people, and although when one does watch their public processes of eating it is rather an alarming sight, it is not one often ob-

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truded upon our sensibilities. No, it is the American people that, each man a monarch in his own opinion, exercises its sovereign right of calling the public to assist at its feeding, and not always, I grieve to say, to admire either its dexterity or elegance. We travel incessantly; we do not care for private dining rooms unless we entertain a private party; we do not take our own carriages, if we have them, nor do we adopt upon our railways coaches small enough to be secured for one party, unless, indeed, we are magnates and travel in our own "Pullman," as I most tenderly remember having done when I visited California some years since.

Yes, while upon our travels we eat in public naturally, when in foreign countries choosing the *table d'hôte*, almost as a matter of course, and returning to what we call home, we generally make it in a hotel or boarding house, where, according to our means and our locality, we may enjoy the very perfection of good living, as I am fortunate enough to do, or we may be obliged to put up with the disagreeables of a

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third-rate boarding house, as I have had to do.

But at either of these extremes and all the way between, we eat in public, and all the world may, if it take the trouble to notice, see just how and what we eat, so that as traveling generally deprives me of an appetite not very robust at the best, and as life has trained me to quick observance, I have allowed myself to notice a good deal, and let me confess it a little shamefacedly, I am always rather pleased when I am placed at a big table filled with traveling companions, rather than at a little one with only my own party, who are generally more pleasing than amusing. Let me remember, by way of instance, a journey made some time since, when for a week or two I sat at a public table with only one companion to divert my attention.

At my other side was a dear good lady arrived at that period of life when one cares a good deal about dinner, and has outgrown any affectation upon the subject. This lady always

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secured the first reading of the *menu*, or as she called it in her plethoric voice the "billerfare," and rapidly ordered nearly all the list, comprising two kinds of soup or of fish, and a portion of each of the roasts, all the vegetables, salads and *entrées*, and invariably two or three kinds of pastry and pudding. As for dessert, she hardly seated herself before she drew the fruit dish toward her, and with great *naïvete* picked over the whole contents, selecting the best specimens, which she piled around her soup plate, complacently eying them from time to time as she progressed through her meal; of course she did not eat all that she ordered—the laws of mechanics would not have allowed the larger bulk to be enclosed in the less—but she had it all, and she spoiled it all. At the end of the dinner she would give a heavy sigh of satisfaction, and with the skill of long practice load herself with the varied forms of plunder she desired to convey to her room, and sail away like some noble galleon deep with the spoils of foreign seas.

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Just opposite me sat a family consisting of father, mother, and son of about ten years old, a pallid, unhealthy boy, who needed a chance to run off some of his flesh. The mother, poor little woman, was a nervous dyspeptic, and ate very little, and that of the most harmless description. Her husband, on the other hand, was a big man in brutal health and of a surly disposition. He meant to have his rights, he did, even though, like some other people, he did not know what to do with them when he got them. He would not take the trouble to order from the bill of fare, but generally growled at the waiter: "Bring me what there is, and be quick about it!" and, as it was one of his rights to be waited upon without feeing the waiter, he was very poorly served as a general thing. After a while, however, his plate would be surrounded with a heterogeneous crowd of little dishes containing fish, fowl, flesh, vegetables, salad and sauces, from all of which he partook freely and with a noble indiscrimination, eating his roast before his fish, or his wild fowl

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along with his vegetables, or making a hodge-podge in his plate of everything together, with tomato sauce poured over the whole. He ordered his coffee at the beginning of dinner, and had it in a large cup, with plenty of milk and sugar, and he drank it in a loud and pugnacious manner, glaring over the edge of the cup with eyes that said, "Who's a better right?"

The peevish little boy was coming on to copy his father, as boys will, and one morning, having ordered steak, chicken and chop, was clamoring for omelet and scrod, when his mother checked him, saying quietly, "Eat some of these things before you ask for any more."

"Let him alone, Lucy," growled the husband. "I shall have to pay just the same if he only eats one thing. Let him get the money's worth, can't you?"

The poor woman looked ashamed, and I did not wonder.

Another person who once gave me a good deal of amusement was a very fastidious and dainty lady, apparently of the maiden persua-

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sion and of mature years. She was very elegant, indeed, in her ways, and always curled her little finger high in the air when she raised her teacup to her lips. She always ordered "a very, very little" of this or that dish, and gave most of her attention to the *entrées*, which she ate as a sort of dressing or sauce to the more solid dishes, consuming apple fritters and fried bananas, or rice with jelly, in alternate mouthfuls with roast beef, and using macaroni and cheese as an accompaniment to her sherbet.

Perhaps she liked it better so, and it certainly is a free country, but yet the question arises, ought people not to learn the correct method of using luxuries before they claim them, and is it well to adopt foreign modes of serving food unless we also adopt foreign abstemiousness and delicacy of eating?

The dinners in large hotels and boarding houses are nowadays served in the French fashion, with French names for the different courses, but a Frenchman never expects to do more than taste each dish as it comes before

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him in due order. He "opens his appetite," as the Spaniard says, with an olive, a shrimp, or a raw oyster, with lemon and ice. He takes a spoonful or two of soup, and perhaps a square inch of fish. He partakes sparingly of an *entrée*, coming, as its name implies, between the courses. He has a small slice of the roast, but does not heap his plate with every vegetable under the sun, to eat with it. The salad and bird make rather the point of his dinner, but a very little suffices him. He uses the sherbet to revive and freshen his palate after the heavy course, and prepare it to appreciate the more delicate flavors to come. He generally does not care for sweets, puddings and pastries, but likes some cool and juicy fruit, and a little cup of strong, black coffee to finish with, and rises from the table fully fed and satisfied, but not gorged. Everything has been done decently and in order, and the process of eating has been, as far as possible, redeemed from its animal and humiliating characteristics.

Now I am not saying that it is obligatory

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upon Americans to eat just as French people do. We are (speaking impersonally) a more robust race than they, we have more money and spend it more freely, we live in a more exacting climate, and must live more rapidly in every way; consequently, we perhaps need, certainly demand, more and heavier food. For many of us, perhaps, the old English system of mighty joints, roasted or boiled with their due complement of vegetables, and a "good, sensible pudding," as an Englishman I knew used to say, would be more satisfactory and more easily understood. It is not my own taste, but it is an honest and harmless one, and any one possessing it had better, if he is to dine at a public table, make friends with his waiter, and, calmly ignoring the opening courses, have a double portion of the beef or the mutton set before him with appropriate vegetables, and if this does not suffice, order it directly over again. Then some pudding or pie, also duplicated if desired, with an apple or pear at the end, will make out a plain, solid, hearty dinner, just such as our

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fathers and mothers or perhaps grandparents ate in their day, before French "kickshaws" (as they artlessly pronounced *quelque chose*) came in fashion. It is not necessary, my good, plain, unpretending friend, to order everything upon the bill of fare, or to try to satisfy your healthy appetite with made dishes, whose names and whose composition are both foreign to you, nor need you fancy that people will laugh at you for following out your own simple tastes; they will be far more likely to laugh at you for pretending tastes which you have not and need not.

To those who do wish to adopt foreign modes of eating, I would say that self-control and abstemiousness at table are two of the most marked traits of French table manners, and might well be imitated among us. I do not mean refrain from eating what you honestly desire, for a small appetite is no virtue, and its affectation is very absurd, but eat what you want with self-control and quietly, not trying to absorb with your eyes what you cannot consume with your mouth. However hungry you

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may be, do not forget the courtesies of the table toward others, do not forget to finish your sentence, or to reply to your neighbor's remark, because some appetizing dish makes it appearance. Don't, above all, gloat over your food, like Dicken's fat boy. I have once or twice seen a glance come into eyes which had been looking tender things into my own—a look which convinced me that, however sensitive that man's heart might be, his stomach was a good deal more so, and when he had resumed the tender demonstrations at a later hour I have longed to inquire:

“Do you love me as well as you do cock's combs with truffles?”

Then, if you wish to eat a dinner after the French fashion, respect the courses. The gastronomic ideas of the great cooks and great eaters of the world are worth consideration. Certain viands are suitable to eat before and certain others after, the principal dish, and to invert their order, or to mix them all in a sort of promiscuous confusion is, to say the least, a

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bad taste. If you wish to adopt the new fashions of feeding, adopt their spirits and their propriety. If you don't care for so much ceremony and thought, eat some simple dish, and let the sequence of the courses alone. In honest, if somewhat rude, phrase, don't allow yourself to be a gourmand and a glutton.

XXX.

**A CONUNDRUM WITHOUT AN
ANSWER.**

IT is always a pretty sure sign that a subject is alive, and although much discussed, never settled when it keeps coming up for fresh discussions, and is always receiving fresh settlements.

Men do not earnestly and angrily discuss the question of the sun rising in the east, although, to be sure, it is not very long since a prophet arose in Pennsylvania to declare that the earth is stationary and the sun revolvant, but as a general thing that subject, as well as the fact that two and two make four, has been settled and laid away some time since along with the veraciousness of George Washington and the supremacy of the American eagle over all the fowl that fly.

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Among these ever to be debated and never settled subjects there is not one, especially in our own country, so impossible to decide, so keenly debated, so vehemently decided, first on the one side and then on the other, as divorce.

A large body of persons, and many of them among the very best and wisest of our people, 'clergymen, statesmen and leaders of public thought, have banded themselves in an anti-divorce league, pledged to use their best endeavors to procure a uniform divorce law in all our States, and that law to be of the most stringent, only allowing divorce for the Scriptural offense, and even in that case not without final proof and great and protracted effort.

Our English cousins, always prone to the conservative course, and as fond of red tape as they are of red beef, until the establishment of Sir Cresswell's divorce court, have tried this method of rigid legislation upon divorce, and not with the most fortunate results. Look, for instance, at the life of George Eliot. If the English law had set Mr. Lewes free from his

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profligate wife, he and Mary Ann Evans would have been quietly married according to law, and the great novelist would not have left upon her name a stain which, however affection and respect may gild it, remains precisely the same stain attaching to the name of any other woman who lives with a man legally married to another woman. Or look at Charles Mordaunt, whom the English law refused to set free from a woman whose excesses had driven her to insanity.

On that trial and from other sources it has been all too plainly proven that the rigid English law of divorce of fifty years ago did not succeed in guarding the sanctity of the marriage covenant, or the honor and peace of the family any more effectually than the laxest of our Western State regulations. To say a divorce is more easily procured in New York than in London is absurd—our State being especially rigid—and a New York divorce puts the blame where it is deserved, smirching only the character of the one against whom the judg-

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ment is rendered, and forbidding a subsequent marriage by the offending party.

In some parts of the far West it is said one may get a divorce for almost any conceivable cause. I do not vouch for the exactness of this statement, but can well believe it after some "incidents of travel" in the West. Among these was a brief companionship with a young girl of seventeen, hailing from Chicago. After half an hour's acquaintance this young lady, who was as pretty and as silly as any girl I have ever met anywhere, confided to me that she and "Charlie" made two of a party to visit Milwaukee for the day, and as the theater "kept late" they missed the train they had planned to take home. In this dilemma some one suggested that the young men had better marry the girls, and then it would be quite correct to go to a hotel. Three couples accepted the proposition, and she and Charlie became man and wife after an acquaintance of about a fortnight.

"And where is Charlie now?" ventured I, seeing that the poor child was evidently alone.

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"Oh, he's at home in Chicago," replied she carelessly. "He's in a store and don't get enough to buy his salt, let alone my hats. I reckon I'll stop East awhile with some friends, and then get a divorce. We were only fooling when we got married, you know, and we don't get along first-rate anyhow."

"And what do your parents say about it?" asked I. But the girl tossed her head in pretty scorn at the idea of parental interference.

"I guess they haven't got much to say about it. Pa's gone off to Mexico or somewhere, and ma's just got married again, and is glad to be shut of me. Reckon I can paddle my own canoe without their help."

Now, between the laxity which renders such a story as this possible—and I assure you it is absolutely a true story—and the rigidity which drove George Lewes and Mary Ann Evans to open defiance of law, there lies a vast distance, a happy medium, wherein, to my mind, the true solution of the problem lies, which again reminds me of a learned joke first narrated and

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then explained to me by a "gentleman from Boston" during my late Western tour.

It seems that Professor Agassiz, with some other learned pundits of Boston, was unwrapping a recently imported mummy, and disputing as to its being that of a priest, a fact presently established by their coming upon the mummy of an ibis in the midst of the swathings of the human mummy, whereupon Agassiz triumphantly exclaimed:

"Veritas, in medias res tutissima ibis!"

By way of coming down softly from these Athenian heights I will add to this anecdote one from my own experience more familiarly illustrating the same theory. I was having my photograph taken by a very charming foreigner, recently acquainted with the English tongue, and he, after various efforts to get the proper expression upon my face, exclaimed:

"Not too severe and not too smiling, but let us find a *happy middling* if we would be perfect."

One would not of course be flippant upon a

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subject like this, involving as it does the deepest and most vital interests of so many human beings, and although it has undeniably its humorous side, the general aspect is one of profound sadness and perplexity.

Two persons marry. Perhaps they are in the first flush of youth, with all sorts of rose-colored ideals confidently set before their eyes, or perhaps they are older, and having already known sorrow and disappointment and disillusionment, fancy they have at last found a companion whose sympathy and comradeship are to make up for a great deal of what is forever lost. In either case the contract, at least on the woman's part, is made with full intention of fulfilling its obligations. She repeats her vow of constancy "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, till death do us part," with a sense of joyful security and certainty. The drifting is over, the loneliness and forlornness past. Never, never again will she stand in the twilight, murmuring that threadbare yet ever new lament:

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“ My bark’s upon a darkling sea,
And no one stands beside me,
And no one minds the helm for me,
And no one cares to guide me.”

And the man, if he be a true and honorable man, as he turns from the altar tells himself that in this hour a new life must begin for him—the old follies and vices must be forsworn, the old companions forgotten, the old crooked ways be made straight and clean. He has promised to “love, cherish and protect” this woman, “and forsaking all others keep himself only unto her so long as both shall live”—solemn words and a large promise, but he means it all—at least we will hope most bridegrooms do.

They go home, and life begins, and for some, perhaps one-half of those wedded couples, the early promise and the solemn vows become realities—at least, we will say, approximate realities—and time, the effacer and the reconciler, smooths over the shortcomings and buries the memory of those lofty ideals, and brings a

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certain cynical philosophy into the life and so makes of it not what was expected, not what was planned, but something tolerable and moderately satisfactory—at least as good as the lives of other people around about, and—yes, well enough, let us say.

Out of this great mass of mankind there are a few, a very few, married couples who do really fulfill their ideals and find life just what they had hoped, just what they had planned. They are fully satisfied and go about the world gloating over their own happiness and flaunting it in the faces of other people in a fashion that would be exasperating, if it were not so pathetic.

Now, this class of persons look upon divorce as near akin to murder or sacrilege or madness. They cannot in the least understand how anybody once admitted to the paradise of matrimony could ever wish to leave it or to drive their other self out of its dear inclosure. They speak with bated breath or with uplifted eyebrows and whispers of holy horror and dismay as they wonder what strange sort of beings

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those may be, and finally giving up the gloomy conundrum, turn with a sigh of relief to throw themselves into each other's arms and "thank with brief thanksgiving whatever powers may be" that they are not like other men.

Returning to that great class of married people who just get on after a fashion, with a good deal of bickering and a good many spoken or unspoken doubts as to whether marriage is worth while or not, we find them also opposed to divorce, but from a different standpoint than the little clique of paradisiacs just described. They thoroughly recognize why some people wish to be divorced. They are more or less frankly conscious of occasionally wishing to be so themselves, but they have never said so aloud, and the bitterness of their opposition to this mode of relief is that they do not care to see others rid themselves of a burden which they have made up their minds to bear. It is just the dog in the manger over again. "I can't eat this clover, and so you sha'n't," says the dog to the ox, and sometimes the ox is scared away and gives up his proposed banquet.

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“If I can get along with Tom, I imagine you can with Dick, and so can you with Harry,” says one of these philosophers to her sisters who are whispering about divorce, and then, warming with her topic, she reads them a lecture upon the sinfulness and the shamefulness and the general depravity of the woman who will see her name “dragged through a divorce court,” and the duty of every wife to submit with patience and sweetness to her marriage lot, whatever it may turn out to be, and if she can’t reform her husband, to win him over by the exhibition of her own virtues until he falls in love with goodness and forsakes vice, and “all goes happy ever after.”

Yes, these discontented and yet obstinately “staying” wives are the bitterest and most virulent opposers of divorce, and do very possibly effect some good by dragooning their feebler sisters into a submission that not infrequently ends in a half bitter, half indifferent acquiescence in a fate very different from what was hoped, and yet not too bad to be endured with

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some sort of philosophical content. To wives of this class—in fact, of all three of the classes just described—I say: Stay where you are. Be satisfied with the frying-pan and don't jump into fire. Bear the ills you have and do all that you can to alleviate them. Above all, if you have children, sacrifice your own worn and weary life to their fresh young promise. A woman who has borne a child has in a manner pledged herself to bear for that child what she would not bear for herself; and great strength comes from a heavy burden well borne. That is the way the Italian women acquire their queenly poise.

But there is still another class, and a large one, to whom I would not proffer this advice; to whom I would rather say: Save yourselves while you can—women without children and without obligations except the marriage vows, which have been flung back upon them, shattered and soiled by him who had sworn to hold them sacred and inviolate “so long as ye both shall live.” When this day comes to any wife,

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the day when she finds her home ruined, her womanhood insulted, her self-respect outraged; when she finds that her petitions, her tears, her arguments and her warnings alike are scoffed and disregarded; when she sees that she can do nothing to elevate the man who persistently degrades himself and drags her down with him; when she fears that blows may be added to cursing and coarseness, then my advice to that woman is, appeal to the law for a release from a union which has become a slavery; annul the contract broken and despised by the other contracting party; be free.

Every legal covenant is made dependent upon the mutual honesty and good faith of the covenanters, and if one fails to fulfill his stipulated obligation the other is released, often with a compensation for his disappointment.

Is not marriage a contract worthy of as much protection as the copartnership agreement of a firm of grocers or brokers?

Let us do nothing either rashly or with too much prejudice or conservatism. Let us, if we

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would achieve success, seek "the happy middling" between these two extremes.

While harmless as doves do not let us forget to be also wise as serpents.

XXXI.

ABOUT ENGAGEMENTS.

THERE is no law in the social code at once so stringent and so variable as that relating to the manner of conducting an engagement of marriage. It is a good ideal like the children's game,

"Simon says this!
Simon says thus!"

And whether it is this or thus, the players must do exactly as Simon orders.

Sometimes, for instance, Mrs. Grundy has demanded that betrothals should be of the most private, almost surreptitious character; that there should be "an understanding" between the young people, and a few, a very few, of the bride's family should be let into the secret, but that the world at large should be astonished,

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and taken altogether by surprise in hearing some fine morning that Colin and Phyllis were married "very quietly" at the bride's home a few days since.

Then Mrs. Grundy takes a French fit, and the marriage is to be arranged between the two families, and announced by a betrothal party given by the bride's mother. Just now, I believe, it is the thing for the girl herself to give a tea to her girl friends, and receive their congratulations and some little gifts—heralds, as it were, of the more costly wedding gifts to come—all by herself. In fact, so strict is the idea of "ladies only" on these occasions that everybody was very much scandalized by the presence of the Colin of one of these latter engagement parties.

"So very awkward! So indelicate!" exclaimed one of the guests in my presence, and I could not but suggest that perhaps the *fiancée* felt that seeing is believing, and wished to prove that her pretensions were not without foundation.

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This parading the engagement and the engaged is perhaps one extreme, but certainly a former friend of mine went to the other when she one day invited her own mother into her bedroom and, exhibiting a white silk dress lying upon the couch, remarked: "That's my wedding dress, mother, and I shall be married to-morrow evening, here at home."

I always thought if I had been that mother I would have replied as coolly: "Oh, indeed! I'm sorry, but I am going away for two or three days, and shall start in an hour."

Another New York girl whom I knew walked out of the house one morning, went to the Little Church we all know of, was married, bought a paper of chocolate creams and went home, while her husband took a train West. Some months later he returned to the city, called upon his wife, and the two together announced the marriage to the somewhat astonished parents of the bride, the daughter remarking that she "didn't want the fuss of an engagement."

But it seems to me that these secretive people

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lose one of the very prettiest and most ideal epochs of life, the season of open and privileged betrothal. One feels it in reading history and seeing the pretty pageant of the *fiançailles* of some fair young princess who returns for awhile to her father's house a maiden, yet bearing somewhat of the sweet dignity of matronhood and the honors of her future state.

In the English marriage service, as used in the mother country, there is provision made for a betrothal service, to be followed weeks, months, or, as is now the use, moments after, by the real marriage ceremony, and at one wedding whereat I assisted in London the man and maid stopped at the entrance of the choir and there "gave their troth" before proceeding to the altar steps, where they were married.

It seems to me that if some pretty daughter of Murray Hill were to set the fashion of going to church and being betrothed, and then having a reception in her father's house, it would be received as a quaint and original idea, and set a charming fashion.

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All pretty ideas, however, may be expanded like bubbles until they burst, and this has been. There was a period when betrothals, especially in Scotland, were looked upon in nearly the same light as marriages and great immoralities sprung from them. One of Sir Walter Scott's novels, "The Monastery," I believe, turns upon this idea, the betrothed pair calling themselves "handfast" and openly living together.

The same abuse of betrothal is brought forward in Wilkie Collins's novel of "The Cloister and the Hearth," one of the best stories he ever wrote. In fact, the marriage records became so obscure and so vague in consequence of this abuse of betrothal, that the Scottish law was obliged, in defense of the rights of property, to ordain that any couple calling themselves man and wife, or even living together in those relations, were actually to be held as such, although no marriage ceremony had been imposed upon them.

The privileges and rights of betrothed lovers have been, and perhaps are, as vague as the

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importance of betrothal. We shall all agree that Scott's hero, and others like him, pushed both rights and privileges to an undue extent, but on the other hand, I heard one lady boast that her husband had no more than kissed her hand before she was married to him, and a man of my acquaintance, bemoaning his unhappy marriage, said that he knew nothing at all of his wife's character until it was too late, for they had only been alone twice before their wedding day, and at home she was effaced by her clever and managing mamma.

But very few, either of men or maids, would be content with such a cool and formal engagement as these, and however they begin, they generally manage as time goes on to secure some private interviews, and I dare say to indulge in some caresses a little warmer than the kissing of hands.

It is the nature of man to pursue, and it ought to be the nature of woman to fly, and to keep on flying as long as the pursuit continues; and let me tell you in your ear, my dears, that it is

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the very best way to keep up his interest in the pursuit; but still a loving and confiding young girl does not always copy too closely the manners of Diana, who had Actæon hounded to death for peeping at her in the bath, nor of Atalanta, who expended all the golden apples in diverting her *prétendu* from the chase; they are not generally mortally offended if the engaged lover claims a kiss or two, and I have heard of dear little creatures who not only accepted but returned these sweet trifles, and were after all none the worse off for it.

Yes, lovers will demonstrate their love, I suppose, and for my part I agree with the old essayist who says: "All men love a lover," and always feel very indulgent toward any of their sweet follies which come under my notice. Still I do want to say one little word to the dear girls whom I love and admire so heartily, and it is this:

Keep your place. The time of betrothal is the time of your greatest power and authority, at any rate, unless as a wife you earn for yourself

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a place that many wives never attain. But now, now while you are promised to this man, and not yet in his power, while he still clothes you with the shining robe of an ideal, and familiarity has not as yet betrayed the fact that you are after all only an ordinary woman, now, when he may not be with you at all times, and spends much of his absence in reviewing the last interview, now is the time, if you are wise and hold yourself steadily in hand, keeping your own place and keeping him in his, that you may establish yourself in a position with regard to this man which you need never lose.

Don't be cold, or unsympathetic, or prudish and old maidish, for no real man can endure that and keep his love; but never come down from your throne to sit at his feet; never lay aside your royal robes of maidenly reserve and sensitive purity; never fail to respect yourself and you will never lose his respect, and there is absolutely no foundation for enduring love but respect; believe me, for it is true.

Men talk of liking women whose hearts out-

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run their heads, who have no will of their own, who are like wax in their hands, etc., etc., but although they may eagerly seek these pretty dolls for an hour, they soon weary of them, and if they ever marry, the wedding day is the end instead of the beginning of the love story. Be wise, my little girl, be wise! Recognize your own strength and your own power and make the most of it; hold yourself back and your lover will pursue; remain queen of your own position, and he will make you queen of his; come down from your own place and lay yourself at his feet, and he will rest his foot upon you, and believe it is the natural and right thing to do.

I have a theory of my own, that if a man breaks off his marriage engagement it is almost always the girl's fault. She has been either too hard or too soft with him, either chilled him into the conviction that she is heartless and devoid of tenderness, or she has valued herself so lightly that he has learned to hold very cheaply what is so lavishly bestowed.

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And yet I condemn very seriously the man who for less than the gravest causes will break off his engagement to the girl he has seriously invited to become his wife. Nothing is more damaging to a girl in a social point of view than to have been jilted, and although she may not be at all to blame in the matter, or at most have only shown errors of judgment and self-management, a sort of stigma attaches to her in almost every circle of society, and another man is less likely to seek her in marriage. The man is not injured, nor are his chances of subsequent marriage affected at all, whether it is he or she who breaks off the engagement, and for that reason it always seems to me that if an engagement must be broken the man should have the chivalry to take the odium of being discarded upon his own shoulders, and declare the young lady to have been the discarder.

I am always so sorry when I see in the papers that some girl, or perhaps some widow, is suing a man for breach of promise of marriage, for I always imagine it to be the suicidal expression

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of angry pride and wounded love, self-love as well as other love, and that the poor, hot-tempered, desperate creature has only seized upon the weapon nearest at hand wherewith to strike at the man she still loves, and is so bitterly ashamed of herself for loving.

One class of women takes to horsewhips, and one to pistols, and one to the law, and one to resolute defamation, and I am sorry for them all, for I am sure they never would so disgrace themselves except in the extremity of great suffering, for I know that in the very nature of things their revenge, however successful, will entail more suffering in the end. And I am sorry, too, for the more dignified and patient victims who say not a word and do not a thing, but draw the robe close over the bleeding wound and dance, and sing, and smile in calm defiance of their own breaking hearts and wounded womanhood.

Yes, I pity these, but I hardly know whether I pitied a lady, now dead, whom I used to know. She was engaged to a man whom she

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not only loved, but respected and admired, and who seemed, as all the world said, the one man in the world whom she should marry. A noble position was offered to him and he went to Spain to make arrangements for accepting it, and to prepare a home for his bride. One of the sudden fevers of the country seized upon his unacclimated system, and in three days he was dead.

His bride-to-be made little open lament, but in the same day she heard the news set off to visit a sister in a distant city. When she came home she was dressed in widow's weeds, and always wore them until the day of her death, some twenty years later. She was always cheerful, always silent, always gently reserved, tender and loving to those who remained, but never pretending to any other place than that she had assumed—a widow in heart, if not in name.

It was, perhaps, the happiest life she could have chosen.

XXXII.

WEDLOCK IN DANGER.

WHY don't you marry and have a house of your own to oversee and children to bring up and a husband to take care of? I'll warrant there'd soon be an end of all these fads about 'higher education' and woman's mission and the 'emancipation of the enslaved sex,' and all the rest of the rubbish I hear you talk."

Thus in my hearing not long since did a certain grandmamma, whom I extremely admire and love, address her namesake, a bright girl of twenty summers, who at once replied frankly and succinctly:

"We don't marry nowadays, grandmamma, because the men don't ask us to. It's out of fashion."

"Out of fashion! Nonsense. The world isn't

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going to stop growing, is it? If the men don't ask you, why, you must ask them, that's all."

"It wasn't so in your day, was it, grand-mamma?" pursued the girl mischievously; and the dear old lady bridled a little and set off upon a train of reminiscences more exciting than a fairy story.

Nor was she a solitary instance in my experience. Ask almost any woman of seventy years and over as to the opportunities of matrimony that were offered to her before twenty-five, and if she has been a pretty girl she will tell you much the same story, and veraciously, too, for I have heard old gentlemen tell the same stories from their own side. If a girl was young and comely and gay and bright, it was a foregone conclusion three-quarters of a century ago that she would have what they called "beaux" in abundance, and would marry whenever she was tired of her position as queen of hearts. If they did not care to abdicate too early, they favored now one and now another of their courtiers, played off one swain against another,

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broke hearts and caused Wertherlike tragedies, for in those days people read "The Sorrows of Werther" with tearful sympathy instead of with peals of laughter, as do we modern cynics.

If you don't believe all this, go and ask your own grandmamma if she ever had an admirer except grandpapa, and if she is one of the right sort of old ladies—an old lady with soft blue eyes and a pretty smile and fine white skin, all covered with a lace pattern of tiny wrinkles, and silvery, wavy hair—if she is that sort of a grandmamma, you will spend at least one delightful twilight hour in hearing of the old times, the good old times when girls were queens of love and beauty and men were their humble adorers, and only withheld their proposals from a very becoming sense of their unworthiness.

To be sure, if you are a girl, these stories may have the effect that novels did upon Gloriana, who, instead of being amused at the tales of romance she read, only wept into her checked apron because "there were so many good times and she not in them."

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But if you are a young man you will feel the same sort of self-congratulation you do in reading the "Lives of the Martyrs." You would not have liked to throw incense upon a heathen altar and trample the cross under your feet, but you don't feel at all sure that you would have withstood the temptation to escape the rack and the boiling oil.

Certainly the times have changed, and men change with them, for us as well as for Ulysses, and I say "men" advisedly, for I don't think women have changed as much. Most girls—that is, the dear, rosy, dimpling darlings, who are papa's pet and mamma's blessing, and who do not insist upon becoming civil engineers or doctors of law, medicine or theology—these girls, pure and simple, are willing enough to marry if some one whom they love asks them to do so. But the men do not propose, and the good old methods are out of vogue, and the times are out of joint.

Young men have extended their privileges and contracted their liabilities. Formerly if

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an unmarried man paid particular attention to a girl or a young widow, it was understood by all observers that he was a candidate for her hand if he could gain her reluctant consent to accept him. The girl's parents looked serenely on, conscious that their daughter was mistress of the situation, and needed neither assistance nor protection—conscious, too, that the young man would be a very fortunate fellow if he gained so desirable a wife—and they would not stand in his way, although they were sincerely sorry to lose the flower of their family.

After awhile the girl shyly told her mother that Reuben and she were going to be married about Thanksgiving time, and although there was not often any open announcement of the engagement, and certainly no receptions or presents to mark the occasion, the bride's family began preparations for the wedding and the setting up of the young couple at house-keeping. It was all so simple and honest and natural that to hear of those times is like reading of the golden age or the lost Atlanta, or

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any other of those dreams of some bygone perfection, or some coming millennium.

Occasionally in those days the young man behaved in a manner which is now the rule, but then was the exception, and proved himself a trifler and a male flirt, amusing himself for the hour, but with no serious intentions. But he was not then, as he now is, suffered to get off scot free from this sort of pleasantry. If, after a due period of courtship, the youth made no offer of matrimony, but showed symptoms of transferring his attentions to some other shrine, the father or brother of the slighted fair one called him to account, demanding an explanation of his conduct, and giving him to understand that if he had no serious intentions, they had, and that, having danced to pleased himself, he was now to pay the piper to please them.

Generally a little conversation of this sort was effectual, and the tardy swain insisted that he had only been waiting for encouragement to declare himself, but if the trifler really tired to cry off and escape without penalty, the

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brother or father significantly handled a heavy riding whip or cane or glanced at the stout boots he might chance to be wearing. Sometimes indeed a marriage has been solemnized at the muzzle of a loaded pistol, with an angry father at its other end, and I have heard of an old-time marriage where the bridegroom, being asked, "Do you take this woman for your wedded wife?" replied, "Not if I can help it," and the bride's brother deliberately cocked and aimed his pistol, demanding, "What was your reply, sirrah?" "Yes, I do," returned the other, grinding his teeth, and the marriage proceeded. One does not envy that unfortunate bride, however, and in point of fact she died before the year was over of a broken heart. However, the family honor was saved, and in those old days they placed a good deal of value upon family honor. So old-fashioned!

But these extremities of persuasion were very rare. Generally speaking, the young man asked for no greater privilege than an early wedding, and the father had only to open his

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pocketbook, and the brother to make himself agreeable, and the mother to buy and cut whole bolts of linen and cambric and cotton into the *trousseau* which the pretty bride helped to make up with her own fingers.

And now all this is changed. Instead of placidly looking on to see her daughter hold a little court and select the one she means to favor from a crowd of eager aspirants, the mother must be, like the early bird, very early on the ground to capture the biggest and richest worm before any other mother bird can grab him and carry him to drop into her nestling's open mouth. No wonder she gets an anxious and eager look herself and worries and frets and twitters and chirps overmuch and keeps the home nest in a condition of turmoil, for the worm has grown very wary, and if in taking his early walks abroad he espies the flitting form of the mother bird or even hears her sweet if sharpened song of greeting, he is apt to precipitately retire to his burrow or hide beneath some stem or clump of weeds.

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Worse than this, should the bachelor chance to be, instead of a mere worm of earth, a beautiful gold or silver fish disporting himself in the waters of matrimony, then mamma, instead of a bird, is seen as a fisher, a veritable fisher of men, baiting her hook with her daughter's charms, her accomplishments, her virtues, and her affectionate and submissive temperament; but, alas, the gold-fish has grown as "gamy" as a brook trout, and worse, for he can often keep a most experienced angler "in play" for a whole season, and at the end give a sprightly and humorous twist to his glittering tail and fly off at a tangent, to be no more seen in those waters.

Now, why are these things thusly? "Why don't the men propose, mamma?" as runs the cynically comic song.

Surely girls are as sweet and as pretty and as affectionate and as gay as they were a century or so ago, and as grandmamma sensibly remarks, "The world must go on," and if the young men, born and brought up in our own

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land will not assist in propelling the national chariot they must not object later on, when, as Mrs. Gamp has it, "most votes carried the day," and the descendants of the Knickerbockers and the Puritans and the F. F. V.'s find themselves in an unconsidered minority.

But why, I again ask, why should it be so, and why do our young men need to be urged, from political or any other reasons, to make themselves the "happiest of men?"

Of course I know that the question has been asked before and variously answered. But no answer that ever I have heard has met the requirements, and I almost fancy that it must remain one of the conundrums without reply which, like snags and bowlders, still obstruct the stream of time.

One reason, doubtless, is the one most frequently given—the necessities of modern life are too many and too expensive for a young man to rashly undertake.

"The luxuries of one generation become the necessities of the next." It is a sharply true

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aphorism and none the less true because it is a well-worn truism. It might indeed be amplified, for the luxuries of three generations ago are almost disdained by us. Our great-grandmothers were carried about in sedan chairs, our grandmothers drove in chaises and sometimes chariots, our mothers had family "carryalls," and the lady of fashion to-day has her brougham and victoria, with liveried coachman and footman, and a pair of magnificent horses.

Naturally a young man would feel more sure of being able to provide his wife with a sedan chair, a chaise, or even a chariot, than with a brougham. This is one reason; and another is that girls enter upon matrimony with very different intentions and plans of life than they used to. To be a good housekeeper, a good wife, a good mother, was formerly the ambition of a bride, even in the highest circle, and where the husband was yet to come, the young wife knew how to economize in all sorts of pretty ways, and to do a good deal with her own hands, not only to beautify the home but to make it comfortable.

